

THE
WORKS
OF
HORATIO WALPOLE,
EARL OF ORFORD.

VOL. V.

5

W O R K S

HORATIO WALPOLE

EARL OF ORFORD

VOL. V.

33.1
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THE
WORKS
OF
HORATIO WALPOLE,
EARL OF ORFORD.

WALPOLE
ORFORD

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. V.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR G. G. AND J. ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW,
AND J. EDWARDS, PALL-MALL.

MDCCXCVIII.

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WORKS

HORATIO WALLPOLE

EARL OF



IN FIVE VOLUMES

VOL. I.

PRINTED FOR G. D. AND J. ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

AND J. EDWARDS, ST. JAMES'S-MARKET.

MDCCCLXIII.

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FIFTH VOLUME.

LETTERS

L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY,

From the Year 1740 to the Year 1795.

VOL. V.

B

LETTERS

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE HON. HENRY ST. JOHN CONWAY

From the first copy to the last



Field Marshal Conway.

Published as the Act directs May 1st 1798, by G. G. & J. Robinson, Paternoster Row London.

LETTERS

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY,

From the Year 1740 to the Year 1795.

LETTER I.

TO HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY

London, March 6, 1740 N. S.

HARRY dear, one would tell you what a monster you are, if one were not sure your conscience tells you so every time you think of me. At present, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and thirty-nine, I received the last letter from you; by your not writing to me since, I imagine you propose to make this leap year. I should have sent many a scold after you in this long interval, had I known where to have scolded; but you told me you should leave Geneva immediately. I have dispatched fundry emissaries into England after you, all fruitless. At last drops in a chance letter to Lady Sophy Farmer from a girl at Paris, that

Second son of Francis, first lord Conway, in 1770; commander in chief in 1782; and a field-marshal in 1793.
by Charlotte Shorter his third wife.

He was afterwards secretary in Ireland during the viceroyalty of William fourth duke of Devonshire; groom of the bed-chamber to George II. and to George III.; secretary of state in the year 1765; lieutenant general of the ordnance

This correspondence commences when Mr. Walpole was 23 years old, and Mr. Conway two years younger. They had gone abroad together with Mr. Gray in the year 1739, had spent three months together at Rheims, and afterwards separated at Geneva.

4 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

tells her for news, Mr. Henry Conway is here. Is he indeed? and why was I to know it only by this scrambling way? Well, I hate you for this neglect, but I find I love you well enough to tell you so. But, dear now, don't let one fall into a train of excuses and reproaches; if the god of indolence is a mightier deity with you than the god of caring for one, tell me, and I won't dun you; but will drop your correspondence as silently as if I owed you money.

If my private consistency was of no weight with you; yet is a man nothing who is within three days journey of a conclave? nay, for what you knew I might have been in Rome. Harry, art thou so indifferent, as to have a cousin at the election of a pope without courting him for news? I'll tell you, were I any where else, and even Dick H—— were at Rome, I think verily I should have wrote to him. Popes, cardinals, adorations, coronations, St. Peters! oh, what costly sounds! and don't you write to one yet? I shall set out in about a fortnight, and pray then think me of consequence.

I have crept on upon time from day to day here; fond of Florence to a degree: 'tis infinitely the most agreeable of all the places I have seen since London: that you know one loves, right or wrong, as one does one's nurse. Our little Arno is not boated and swelling like the Thames, but 'tis vastly pretty, and, I don't know how, being Italian, has something visionary and poetical in its stream. Then one's unwilling to leave the gallery, and—but—in short, one's unwilling to get into a post-chaise. I am as surfeited with mountains and ians, as if I had eat them. I have many to pass before I see England again, and no Tory to entertain me on the road! Well, this thought makes me dull, and that makes me finish.

Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. Direct to me, (for to be sure you will not be so outrageous as to leave me quite off) *recommandé à mons. Mann, ministre de sa majesté Britannique à Florence.*

LETTER II.

Rome, April 23, 1740 N. S.

AS I have wrote you two such long letters lately, my dear Hal, I did not hurry myself to answer your last; but chose to write to poor Selwyn upon his illness. I pity you excessively upon finding him in such a situation: what a shock it must have been to you! He deserves so much love from all that know him, and you owe him so much friendship, that I can scarce conceive a greater shock. I am very glad you did not write to me till he was out of danger; for this great distance would have added to my pain, as I must have waited so long for another letter. I charge you, don't let him relapse into balls; he does not love them, and, if you please, your example may keep him out of them. You are extremely pretty people to be dancing and trading with French poulterers and pastry-cooks, when a hard frost is starving half the nation, and the Spanish war ought to be employing the other half. We are much more public-spirited here; we live upon the public news, and triumph abundantly upon the taking Porto-Bello. If you are not entirely debauched with your balls, you must be pleased with an answer of lord Hartington's to the governor of Rome. He asked him what they had determined about the vessel that the Spaniards took under the cannon of Civita Vecchia, whether they had restored it to the English! The governor said, they had done justice. My lord replied, "If you had not, we should have done it ourselves." Pray reverence our spirit, lieutenant Hal.

Sir, Moscovita is not a pretty woman, and she does sing ill; that's all.

My dear Harry, I must now tell you a little about myself, and answer your questions. How I like the inanimate part of Rome you will soon perceive at my arrival in England; I am far gone in medals, lamps, idols, prints, &c. and all the small commodities to the purchase of which I can attain; I would buy the Coliseum if I could: judge. My mornings are spent in the most agreeable manner; my evenings ill enough. Roman conversations are dreadful things! such untoward mawkins as the princesses! and the princes are worse. Then the whole city is littered with French and German abbés, who make up a dismal contrast with the inhabitants.

John Selwyn, elder brother of George Augustus Selwyn. He died about 1750.

The

6 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

The conclave is far from enlivening us; its secrets don't transpire. I could give you names of this cardinal and that, that are talked of, but each is contradicted the next hour. I was there t'other day to visit one of them, and one of the most agreeable, Alexander Albani. I had the opportunity of two cardinals making their entry: upon that occasion the gate is unlocked, and their eminencies come to talk to their acquaintance over the threshold. I have received great civilities from him I named to you, and I wish he were out, that I might receive greater: a friend of his does the honours of Rome for him; but you know that it is unpleasant to visit by proxy. Card. Delci, the object of the Corfini faction, is dying; the hot weather will probably dispatch half a dozen more. Not that it is hot yet; I am now writing to you by my fire-side.

Harry, you saw lord Deskford at Geneva; don't you like him? He is a mighty sensible man. There are few young people have so good understandings. He is mighty grave, and so are you; but you can both be pleasant when you have a mind. Indeed one can make you pleasant, but his solemn *Scotchery* is a little formidable: before you I can play the fool from morning to night, courageously. Good night. I have other letters to write, and must finish this.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE

LETTER III

DEAR HAL,

Florence, March 23, 1741 N.S.

YOU must judge by what you feel yourself of what I feel for Selwyn's recovery, with the addition of what I have suffered from post to post. But as I find the whole town have had the same sentiments about him, (though I am sure few so strong as myself) I will not repeat what you have heard so much. I shall write to him to-night, though he knows without my telling him how very much I love him. To you, my dear Harry, I am infinitely obliged for the three successive letters you wrote me about him, which gave me double pleasure, as they shewed your attention for me at a time that you know I must be so unhappy; and your friendship for him.

TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY. 7

Your account of fir Robert's victory¹ was so extremely well told, that I made Gray translate it into French, and have shewed it to all that could taste it, or were inquisitive on the occasion. I have received a print by this post that diverts me extremely; *the Motion*. Tell me, dear now, who made the design, and who took the likenesses; they are admirable: the lines are as good as one sees on such occasions. I wrote last post to fir Robert, to wish him joy; I hope he received my letter.

I was to have fet out last Tuesday, but on Sunday came the news of the queen of Hungary being brought to bed of a son; on which occasion here will be great triumphs, operas and masquerades, which detain me for a short time.

I won't make you any excuse for sending you the following lines; you have prejudice enough for me to read with patience any of my idlenesses².

My dear Harry, you enrage me with talking of another journey to Ireland; it will shock me if I don't find you at my return: pray take care and be in England.

I wait with some patience to see Dr. Middleton's Tully, as I read the greatest part of it in manuscript; though indeed that is rather a reason for my being impatient to read the rest. If Tully can receive any additional honour, Dr. Middleton is most capable of conferring it.

I receive with great pleasure any remembrances of my lord and your sisters; I long to see all of you. Patapan³ is so handsome that he has been named the silver fleece; and there is a new order of knighthood to be erected to his honour, in opposition to the golden. Precedents are searching, and plans drawing up for that purpose. I hear that the natives pretend to be companions, upon the authority of their dog-skin waistcoats; but a council that has been held on purpose has declared their pretensions impertinent. Patapan has lately taken wife unto him, as ugly as he is genteel, but of a very great family, being the direct heiress of Canis Scaliger, lord of

¹ On the event of Mr. Sandys's motion in the lected column in the place of St. Mark, at house of commons to remove fir Robert Wal- Florence, afterwards printed in the Fugitive pole from the king's presence and councils for Piques.

² Here follows the inscription for the neg- ³ A dog of Mr. Walpole's.

Verona:

8 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

Verona: which principality we design to seize à la Prussienne; that is, as soon as ever we shall have persuaded the republic of Venice, that we are the best friends they have in the world. Adieu, dear child! Yours ever,
HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I left my subscriptions for Middleton's Tully with Mr. Selwyn; I won't trouble him, but I wish you would take care and get the books, if Mr. S. has kept the list.

LETTER IV.

Re di Cofano, vulg. Radicofani, July 5, 1740 N. S.

YOU will wonder, my dear Hal, to find me on the road from Rome: why, intend I did to stay for a new popedom, but the old eminences are cross and obstinate, and will not choose one, the holy ghost does not know when. There is a horrid thing called the malaria, that comes to Rome every summer and kills one, and I did not care for being killed so far from christian burial. We have been jolted to death; my servants let us come without springs to the chaise, and we are wore threadbare: to add to our disasters, I have sprained my ankle, and have brought it along, laid upon a little box of bawbles that I have bought for presents in England. Perhaps I may pick you out some little trifle there, but don't depend upon it; you are a disagreeable creature, and may be I shall not care for you. Though I am so tired in this devil of a place, yet I have taken it into my head, that it is like Hamilton's Bawn, and I must write to you. 'Tis the top of a black barren mountain, a vile little town at the foot of an old citadel: yet this, know you, was the residence of one of the three kings that went to Christ's birth-day; his name was Alabaster, Abarasser, or some such thing; the other two were kings, one of the East, the other of Cologn. 'Tis this of Cofano, who was represented in an ancient painting, found in the Palatine Mount, now in the possession of Dr. Mead; he was crowned by Augustus. Well, but about writing—what do you think I write with? Nay,

Nay, with a pen; there was never a one to be found in the whole circumference *but one*, and that was in the possession of the governor, and had been used time out of mind to write the parole with: I was forced to send to borrow it. It was sent me under the conduct of a serjeant and two Swifs, with desire to return it when I should have done with it. 'Tis a curiosity, and worthy to be laid up with the relics which we have just been seeing in a small hovel of Capucins on the side of the hill, and which were all brought by his majesty from Jerusalem. Among other things of great sanctity there is a set of gnashing of teeth, the grinders very entire; a bit of the worm that never dies, preserved in spirits; a crow of St. Peter's cock, very useful against Easter; the crisping and curling, frizzling and frowning of Mary Magdalen, which she cut off on growing devout. The good man that showed us all these commodities was got into such a train of calling them the blessed this, and the blessed that, that at last he showed us a bit of the blessed fig-tree that Christ cursed.

Florence, July 9.

MY DEAR HARRY,

WE are come hither, and I have received another letter from you with Hosier's Ghost. Your last put me in pain for you, when you talked of going to Ireland; but now I find your brother and sister go with you, I am not much concerned. Should I be? You have but to say, for my feelings are extremely at your service to dispose as you please. Let us see: you are to come back to stand for some place; that will be about April. 'Tis a sort of thing I should do too; and then we should see one another, and that would be charming: but it is a sort of thing I have no mind to do; and then we shall not see one another, unless you would come hither—but that you cannot do: nay, I would not have you, for then I shall be gone.—So! there are many *ifs* that just signify nothing at all. Return I must sooner than I shall like. I am happy here to a degree. I'll tell you my situation. I am lodged with Mr. Mann's, the best of creatures. I have a terreno all to myself, with an open gallery on the Arno, where I am now writing to you. Over against me is the famous Gallery; and, on either hand, two fair bridges. Is not this charming and cool? The air is so serene, and so secure, that one sleeps with all the windows and doors thrown open

* Afterwards sir Horace Mann. He was at this time resident at Florence from George II.

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to the river, and only covered with a flight gauze to keep away the gnats. Lady Pomfret* has a charming conversation once a week. She has taken a vast palace and a vast garden, which is vastly commode, especially to the eicifbeo-part of mankind, who have free indulgence to wander in pairs about the arbours. You know her daughters: lady Sophia² is still, nay she must be, the beauty she was: lady Charlotte³ is much improved, and is the cleverest girl in the world; speaks the purest Tuscan like any Florentine. The princess Craon⁴ has a constant pharaoh and supper every night, where one is quite at one's ease. I am going into the country with her and the prince for a little while, to a villa of the great duke's. The people are good-humoured here and easy; and what makes me pleased with them, they are pleased with me. One loves to find people care for one, when they can have no view in it.

You see how glad I am to have reasons for not returning; I wish I had no better.

As to Hosier's Ghost, I think it very easy, and consequently pretty; but, from the ease, should never have guessed it Glover's. I delight in your, *the patriots cry it up, and the courtiers cry it down, and the hawkers cry it up and down*, and your laconic history of the K. and fir R. on going to Hanover, and turning out the D. of A. The epigram too you sent me on the same occasion is charming.

Unless I sent you back news that you and others send me, I can send you none. I have left the conclave, which is the only stirring thing in this part of the world, except the child that the queen of Naples is to be delivered of in August. There is no likelihood the conclave will end, unless the messages take effect, which 'tis said the Imperial and French ministers have sent to their respective courts for leave to quit the Corsini for the Albani faction; otherwise there will never be a pope. Corsini has lost the only one he could

* Henrietta Louisa, wife of Thomas earl of Pomfret.

² Afterwards married to John lord Carteret, who became earl of Granville on the death of his mother in the year 1744.

³ Afterwards married to William Finch, brother to ——— earl of Winchelsea.

⁴ The princess Craon was the favourite mistress of Leopold the last duke of Lorraine, who married her to monsieur de Beauveau, and prevailed on the emperor to make him a prince of the empire. They at this time resided at Florence, where prince Craon was at the head of the council of regency.

have ventured to make pope, and him he designed; 'twas Cenci, a relation of the Corfini's mistress. The last morning Corfini made him rise, stuffed a dish of chocolate down his throat, and would carry him to the scrutiny. The poor old creature went, came back, and died. I am sorry to have lost the sight of the pope's coronation, but I might have staid for seeing it till I had been old enough to be pope myself.

Harry, what luck the chancellor has! first, indeed, to be in himself so great a man; but then in accidents: he is made chief justice and peer, when Talbot is made chancellor and peer: Talbot dies in a twelvemonth, and leaves him the seals at an age when others are scarce made solicitors:—then marries his son into one of the first families of Britain, obtains a patent for a marquissate and eight thousand pounds a year after the duke of Kent's death: the duke dies in a fortnight, and leaves them all! People talk of fortune's wheel that is always rolling: troth, my lord Hardwicke has overtaken her wheel, and rolled along with it.

I perceive miss Jenny would not venture to Ireland, nor stray so far from London; I am glad I shall always know where to find her within three-score miles. I must say a word to my lord*, which, Harry, be sure you don't read. ["My dear lord, I don't love troubling you with letters, because I know you don't love the trouble of answering them; not that I should insist on that ceremony, but I hate to burthen any one's conscience. Your brother tells me he is to stand member of parliament: without telling me so, I am sure he owes it to you. I am sure you will not repent setting him up; nor will he be ungrateful to a brother who deserves so much, and whose least merit is not the knowing how to employ so great a fortune."]

There, Harry, I have done. Don't suspect me: I have said no ill of you behind your back. Make my best compliments to miss Conway†.

I thought I had done, and lo, I had forgot to tell you, that who d'ye think

* Miss Jane Conway, half sister to Henry marquis of Hertford, elder brother to H. Seymour Conway. She died unmarried in 1749. mour Conway.

† Afterwards married to John Harris, esq. of

* Francis lord Conway, afterwards earl and Hayne in Devonshire.

12 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

is here?—Even Mr. More! our Rheims Mr. More! the fortification, hornwork, ravelin, bastion Mr. More! *which is very pleasant sure.* At the end of the eighth side, I think I need make no excuse for leaving off; but I am going to write to Selwyn, and to the lady of the mountain; from whom I have had a very kind letter. She has at last received the Chantilly brags. Good night: write to me from one end of the world to t'other.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER V.

Florence, September 25, 1740 N.S.

MY DEAR HAL,

I BEGIN to answer your letter the moment I have read it, because you bid me; but I grow so unfit for a correspondence with any body in England, that I have almost left it off. 'Tis so long since I was there, and I am so utterly a stranger to every thing that passes there, that I must talk vastly in the dark to those I write; and having in a manner settled myself here, where there can be no news, I am void of all matter for filling up a letter. As, by the absence of the great duke, Florence is become in a manner a country town, you may imagine that we are not without demêlés; but for a country town I believe there never were a set of people so peaceable, and such strangers to scandal. 'Tis the family of love, where every body is paired, and go as constantly together as perroquets. Here nobody hangs or drowns themselves; they are not ready to cut one another's throats about elections or parties; don't think that wit consists in saying bold truths, or humour in getting drunk. But I shall give you no more of their characters, because I am so unfortunate as to think that their encomium consists in being the reverse of the English, who in general are either mad, or enough to make other people so. After telling you so fairly my sentiments, you may believe, my dear Harry, that I had much rather see you here than in England. 'Tis an evil wish for you, who

² See a letter to Mr. West, dated Rheims, 20th July, 1739.

should

should not be lost in so obscure a place as this. I will not make you compliments, or else here is a charming opportunity for saying what I think of you. As I am convinced you love me, and as I am conscious you have one strong reason for it, I will own to you, that for my own peace you should wish me to remain here. I am so well within and without, that you would scarce know me: I am younger than ever, think of nothing but diverting myself, and live in a round of pleasures. We have operas, concerts, and balls, mornings and evenings. I dare not tell you all one's idlenesses; you would look so grave and senatorial, at hearing that one rises at eleven in the morning, goes to the opera at nine at night, to supper at one, and to bed at three! But literally here the evenings and nights are so charming and so warm, one can't avoid 'em.

Did I tell you lady — — is here? She laughs at my lady W——, scolds my lady Pomfret, and is laughed at by the whole town. Her dress, her avarice, and her impudence must amaze any one that never heard her name. She wears a foul mob, that does not cover her greasy black locks, that hang loose, never combed or curled; an old mazarine blue wrapper, that gapes open and discovers a canvass petticoat. Her face swelled violently on one side with the remains of a ———, partly covered with a plaister, and partly with white paint, which for cheapness she has bought so coarse, that you would not use it to wash a chimney.—In three words I will give you her picture as we drew it in the Sortes Virgilianæ—

Infanam vatem aspicias.

I give you my honour, we did not choose it; but Gray, Mr. Cooke, sir Fr. Dashwood and I, and several others, drew it fairly amongst a thousand for different people, most of which did not hit as you may imagine: those that did I will tell you.

For our most religious and gracious ———

— *Dii, talem terris avertite pestem.*

For one that would be our most religious and gracious ———

Purpureus veluti cum flos succisus aratro

Languescit moriens, lassove papavera collo

Demisere caput, pluvia cum fortè gravantur.

For

14 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

For his son.

Regis Romani; primus qui legibus urbem
Fundabit, Curibus parvis et paupere terrâ
Missus in imperium magnum.

For sir Robert.

Res dura et regni novitas me talia cogunt
Moliri, et late fines custode tueri.

I will shew you the rest when I see you.

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VI.

London, 1741.

MY DEAREST HARRY,

BEFORE I thank you for myself, I must thank you for that excessive good nature you shewed in writing to poor G—. I am less impatient to see you, as I find you are not the least altered, but have the same tender friendly temper you always had. I wanted much to see if you were still the same—but you are.

Don't think of coming before your brother; he is too good to be left for any one living: besides, if it is possible, I will see you in the country. Don't reproach me, and think nothing could draw me into the country: impatience to see a few friends has drawn me out of Italy; and Italy, Harry, is pleasanter than London. As I do not love living en famille so much as you (but then indeed my family is not like yours), I am hurried about getting myself a house; for I have so long lived single, that I do not much take to being confined with * * * * *

You won't find me much altered, I believe; at least, outwardly. I am not grown a bit shorter, or a bit fatter, but am just the same long lean creature

ture as usual. Then I talk no French, but to my footman; nor Italian, but to myself. What inward alterations may have happened to me, you will discover best; for you know 'tis said, one never knows that one's self. I will answer, that that part of it that belongs to you, has not suffered the least change—I took care of that.

For virtù, I have a little to entertain you: it is my sole pleasure.—I am neither young enough nor old enough to be in love.

My dear Harry, will you take care and make my compliments to that charming lady Conway¹, who I hear is so charming, and to miss Jenny, who I know is so? As for miss Anne², and her love *as far as it is decent*; tell her, decency is out of the question between us, that I love her without any restriction. I settled it yesterday with miss Conway, that you three are brothers and sister to me, and that if you had been so, I could not love you better. I have so many cousins, and uncles and aunts, and bloods that grow in Norfolk, that if I had portioned out my affections to them, as they say I should, what a modicum would have fallen to each!—So, to avoid fractions, I love my family in you three, their representatives³.

Adieu, my dear Harry! Direct to me at Downing-street. Good bye!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VII

Arlington-street, July 20, 1744

MY DEAREST HARRY,

I FEEL that I have so much to say to you, that I foresee there will be but little method in my letter; but if upon the whole you see my meaning, and the depth of my friendship for you, I am content.

¹ Isabella Fitzroy, daughter of Charles duke of Grafton.

² Miss Anne Conway, youngest sister of Henry Seymour Conway.

³ They were first cousins by the mother's side; Francis the first lord Conway having married Charlotte, eldest daughter of John Shorter of Bybrook in Kent, sister to Catherine Shorter lady Walpole.

16 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

It was most agreeable to me to receive a letter of confidence from you, at the time I expected a very different one from you; though, by the date of your last, I perceive you had not then received some letters, which though I did not see I must call simple, as they could only tend to make you uneasy for some months. I should not have thought of communicating a quarrel to you at this distance; and I don't conceive the sort of friendship of those that thought it necessary. When I heard it had been wrote to you, I thought it right to myself to give you my account of it—but, by your brother's desire, suppressed my letter, and left it to be explained by him, who wrote to you so sensibly on it, that I shall say no more; but that I think myself so ill used, that it will prevent my giving you thoroughly the advice you ask of me; for how can I be sure that my resentment might not make me see in a stronger light the reasons for your breaking off an affair; which you know before I never approved?

You know my temper is so open to any body I love, that I must be happy at seeing you lay aside a reserve with me, which is the only point that ever made me dissatisfied with you. That silence of yours has, perhaps, been one of the chief reasons that has always prevented my saying much to you on a topic which I saw was so near your heart. Indeed, its being so near was another reason; for how could I expect you would take my advice, even if you bore it? But, my dearest Harry, how can I advise you now? Is it not gone too far for me to expect you should keep any resolution about it; especially in absence, which must be destroyed the moment you meet again? And if you ever should marry and be happy, won't you reproach me with having tried to hinder it?—I think you as just, and honest, as I think any man living. But any man living in that circumstance would think I had been prompted by private reasons. I see as strongly as you can, all the arguments for your breaking off; but indeed the alteration of your fortune adds very little strength to what they had before. You never had fortune enough to make such a step at all prudent: she loved you enough to be content with that; I can't believe this change will alter her sentiments, for I must do her the justice to say, that 'tis plain she preferred you with nothing to all the world. I could talk on upon this head; but I will only leave you to consider, with-

* This was an early attachment of Mr. Conway's. By his having complied with the wishes and advice of his friend on this subject, and got the better of his passion, he probably felt that he,

in some measure, owed to Mr. Walpole the subsequent happiness of his life in his marriage with another person. E.

out advising you on either side, these two things: whether you think it honest to break off with her after such engagements as yours (how strong I don't know), after her refusing very good matches for you, and show her that she must think of making her fortune; or whether you will wait with her till some amendment in your fortune can put it in your power to marry her.

My dearest Harry, you must see why I don't care to say more on this head. My wishing it could be right for you to break off with her (for, without it is right, I would not have you on any account take such a step) makes it impossible for me to advise it; and therefore I am sure you will forgive my declining an act of friendship, which your having put in my power gives me the greatest satisfaction. But it does put something else in my power, which I am sure nothing can make me decline, and for which I have long wanted an opportunity. Nothing could prevent my being unhappy at the smallness of your fortune, but its throwing it into my way to offer you to share mine. As mine is so precarious, by depending on so bad a constitution, I can only offer you the immediate use of it. I do that most sincerely. My places still (though my lord W. has cut off three hundred pounds a year to save himself the trouble of signing his name ten times for once) bring me in near two thousand pounds a year. I have no debts, no connections; indeed no way to dispose of it particularly. By living with my father, I have little real use for a quarter of it. I have always flung it away all in the most idle manner. But, my dear Harry, idle as I am, and thoughtless, I have sense enough to have real pleasure in denying myself bawbles, and in saving a very good income to make a man happy for whom I have a just esteem and most sincere friendship. I know the difficulties any gentleman and man of spirit must struggle with, even in having such an offer made him, much more in accepting it. I hope you will allow there are some in making it. But hear me: if there is any such thing as friendship in the world, these are the opportunities of exerting it, and it can't be exerted without 'tis accepted. I must talk of myself to prove to you that it will be right for you to accept it. I am sensible of having more follies and weaknesses and fewer real good qualities than most men. I sometimes reflect on this, though I own too seldom. I always want to begin acting like a man and a sensible one, which I think I might be if I would. Can I begin better, than by taking care of my fortune for one I love? You have seen (I have seen you have) that I am fickle, and foolishly fond of twenty new people: but I don't really love

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them: I have always loved you constantly: I am willing to convince you and the world, what I have always told you, that I loved you better than any body. If I ever felt much for any thing, which I know may be questioned, it was certainly for my mother. I look on you as my nearest relation by her, and think I can never do enough to show my gratitude and affection to her. For these reasons, don't deny me what I have set my heart on—the making your fortune easy to you. * * * * *

[The rest of this letter is wanting.]

LETTER VIII.

Houghton, Oct. 6, 1744.

MY DEAREST HARRY,

MY lord^s bids me tell you how much he is obliged to you for your letter, and hopes you will accept my answer for his. I'll tell you what, we shall both be obliged to you if you will inclose a magnifying glass in your next letters; for your two last were in so diminutive a character, that we were forced to employ all Mrs. Leneve's spectacles, besides an ancient family reading-glass with which my grandfather used to begin the psalm, to discover what you said to us. Besides this, I have a piece of news for you: Sir Robert Walpole, when he was made earl of Orford, left the ministry, and with it the palace in Downing-street; as numbers of people found out three years ago, who not having your integrity were quick in perceiving the change of his situation. Your letter was full as honest as you; for, though directed to Downing-street, it would not, as other letters would have done, address itself to the present possessor. Do but think if it had! The smallness of the hand would have immediately struck my lord Sandys^{*} with the idea of a plot; for what he could not read at first sight, he would certainly have concluded must be cypher.

I march next week towards London, and have already begun to send my heavy artillery before me, consisting of half a dozen books and part of my

* Sir Robert Walpole, first earl of Orford.

chequer on the resignation of Sir Robert Walpole in February 1741, and afterwards created

* Samuel Sandys, made chancellor of the ex-

lord Sandys.

linen;

inen; my light horse commanded by Patapan follows this day se'nnight. A detachment of hussars surprised an old bitch fox yesterday morning, who had lost a leg in a former engagement; and then having received advice of another litter being advanced as far as Dasingham, lord Walpole commanded captain Riley's horse with a strong party of fox-hounds to overtake them: but on the approach of our troops the enemy stole off, and are now encamped at Sechford common, whither we every hour expect orders to pursue them.

My dear Harry, this is all I have to tell you, and to my great joy, which you must forgive me, is full as memorable as any part of the Flanders campaign. I do not desire to have you engaged in the least more glory than you have been. I should not love the remainder of you the least better for your having lost an arm or a leg; and have as full persuasion of your courage as if you had contributed to the slicing off twenty pair from French officers. Thank God, you have sense enough to content yourself without being a hero; though I don't quite forget your expedition a hussar-hunting the beginning of this campaign.—Pray, no more of those jaunts! I don't know any body you would oblige with a present of such game: for my part, a fragment of the oldest hussar on earth should never have a place in my museum; they are not antique enough: and for a live one, I must tell you I like my racoon infinitely better.

Adieu, my dear Harry! I long to see you.—You will easily believe, the thought I have of being particularly well with you is a vast addition to my impatience; though you know it is nothing new to me to be overjoyed at your return.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER IX.

Arlington-street, May 27, 1745.

MY DEAR HARRY,

AS gloriously as you have set out, yet I despair of seeing you a perfect hero! You have none of the charming violences that are so essential to that

Mr. Conway was now with the allied army in Flanders.

character. You write as coolly after behaving well in a battle, as you fought in it. Can your friends flatter themselves with seeing you one day or other be the death of thousands, when you wish for peace in three weeks after your first engagement¹, and laugh at the ambition of those men who have given you this opportunity of distinguishing yourself? With the person of an Orondates, and the courage, you have all the compassion, the reason, and the reflection, of one that never read a romance. Can one ever hope you will make a figure, when you only fight because it was right you should, and not because you hated the French, or loved destroying mankind? This is so un-English, or so un-heroic, that I despair of you!

Thank Heaven, you have one spice of madness! Your admiration of your master² leaves me a glimmering of hope that you will not be always so unreasonably reasonable. Do you remember the humorous lieutenant, in one of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, that is in love with the king? Indeed your master is not behind hand with you; you seem to have agreed to puff one another.

If you are all acting up to the strictest rules of war and chivalry in Flanders, we are not less scrupulous on this side the water in fulfilling all the duties of the same order. The day the young volunteer departed for the army (unluckily indeed it was after the battle), his tender mother Sisygambis, and the beautiful Statira, a lady formerly known in your history by the name of Artemisia, from her cutting off her hair on your absence, were so afflicted and so inseparable, that they made a party together to Mr. Graham's³ (you may read *Iphis* if you please) to be blooded. It was settled that this was a more precious way of expressing concern than shaving the head, which has been known to be attended with false locks the next day.

For the other princess you wot of, who is not entirely so tall as the former, nor so evidently descended from a line of monarchs—I don't hear her talk of retiring. At present she is employed in buying up all the nose-gays in Covent Garden, and laurel-leaves at the pastry-cooks', to weave

¹ The battle of Fontenoy, where Mr. Conway greatly distinguished himself.

² William duke of Cumberland, to whom Mr. Conway was aide-de-camp.

³ A celebrated apothecary in Pall-mall.

chapiets for the return of her hero. Who that is, I don't pretend to know or guess. All I know is, that in this age retirement is not one of the fashionable expressions of passion.

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER X.

Arlington-street, July 1, 1745.

MY DEAR HARRY,

IF it were not for that one slight inconvenience, that I should probably be dead now, I should have liked much better to have lived in the last war than in this; I mean as to the pleasantness of writing letters. Two or three battles won, two or three towns taken, in a summer, were pretty objects to keep up the liveliness of a correspondence. But now it hurts one's dignity to be talking of English and French armies, at the first period of our history in which the tables are turned. After having learnt to spell out of the reigns of Edward the third and Harry the fifth, and begun lispings with Agincourt and Cressy, one uses one's self but awkwardly to the sounds of Tournay and Fontenoy. I don't like foreseeing the time so near, when all the young orators in parliament will be haranguing out of Demosthenes upon the imminent danger we are in from the overgrown power of king Philip. As becoming as all that public spirit will be, which to be sure will now come forth, I can't but think we were at least as happy and as great when all the young Pitts and Lytteltons were pelting oratory at my father for rolling out a twenty years peace, and not envying the trophies which he passed by every day in Westminster-hall. But one must not repine; rather reflect on the glories which they have drove the nation headlong into. One must think all our distresses and dangers well laid out, when they have purchased us Glover's Oration for the merchants, the admiralty for the duke of Bedford, and the reversion of secretary at war for Pitt, which he will certainly have, unless the French king should happen to have the nomination; and then I fear, as much obliged as that court is to my lord Cobham and his nephews, they would be so partial as to prefer some

The author of Leonidas.

illiterate

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illiterate nephew of cardinal Tencin's, who never heard of Leonidas or the Hanover troops.

With all these reflections, as I love to make myself easy, especially politically, I comfort myself with what St. Evremond (a favourite philosopher of mine, for he thought what he liked, not liked what he thought) said in defence of cardinal Mazarin, when he was reproached with neglecting the good of the kingdom that he might engross the riches of it: "Well, let him get all the riches, and then he will think of the good of the kingdom, for it will all be his own." Let the French but have England, and they won't want to conquer it. We may possibly contract the French spirit of being supremely content with the glory of our monarch, and then—why then it will be the first time we ever were contented yet.

We hear of nothing but your retiring¹, and of Dutch treachery: in short, 'tis an ugly scene!

I know of no home news but the commencement of the gaming act, for which they are to put up a scutcheon at White's for the death of play; and the death of Winnington's wife, which may be an unlucky event for my lady —. As he has no children, he will certainly marry again; and who will give him their daughter, unless he breaks off that affair, which I believe he will now very willingly make a marriage article? We want him to take lady Charlotte Fermor. She was always his beauty, and has so many charming qualities, that she would make any body happy. He will make a good husband; for he is excessively good-natured, and was much better to that strange wife than he cared to own.

You wondered at my journey to Houghton; now wonder more, for I am going to Mount Edgecumbe. Now my summers are in my own hands, and I am not obliged to pass great part of them in Norfolk, I find it is not so very terrible to dispose of them up and down. In about three weeks I shall set out, and see Wilton and Doddington's in my way. Dear Harry, do but get a victory, and I will let off every cannon at Plymouth; reserving two, till I hear particularly that you have killed two more Frenchmen with

¹ Mr. Conway was still with the army in Flanders.

your

your own hand¹. Lady Mary² sends you her compliments; she is going to pass a week with miss Townshend³ at Muffits; I don't think you will be forgot. Your sister Anne has got a new distemper, which she says feels like something *jumping* in her. You know my style on such an occasion, and may be sure I have not spared this distemper. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XI.

Windsor Hill⁴; Oct. 3, 1746.

MY DEAR HARRY,

YOU ask me if I am really grown a philosopher. Really I believe not; for I shall refer you to my practice rather than to my doctrine, and have really acquired what they only pretended to seek, content. So far indeed I was a philosopher even when I lived in town, for then I was content too; and all the difference I can conceive between those two opposite doctors was, that Aristippus loved London, and Diogenes Windsor: and if your master the duke, whom I sincerely prefer to Alexander, and who certainly can intercept more sunshine, would but stand out of my way, which he is extremely in, while he lives in the park here, I should love my little tub of forty pounds a year, more than my palace dans la rue des ministres, with all my pictures and bronzes, which you ridiculously imagine I have encumbered myself with in my solitude. Solitude it is, as to the tub itself, for no soul lives in it with me; though I could easily give you room at the butt end of it, and with vast pleasure; but George Montagu, who perhaps is a philosopher too, though I am sure not of Pythagoras's silent sect, lives but two barrels off; and Ashton, a christian philosopher of our acquaint-

¹ Alluding to Mr. Conway's having been engaged with two French grenadiers at once in the battle of Fontenoy.

² Lady Mary Walpole, youngest daughter of Sir R. Walpole, afterwards married to Charles Churchill, esq.

³ Daughter of Charles viscount Townshend, afterwards married to Edward Cornwallis, brother to earl Cornwallis, and groom of the bed-chamber to the king.

⁴ In the summer of the year 1746 Mr. Walpole had hired a small house at Windsor.

ance,

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ance, lives at the foot of that hill which you mention with a melancholy satisfaction that always attends the reflection. Apropos, here is an ode on the very subject, which I desire you will please to like excessively¹:

You will immediately conclude, out of good breeding, that it is mine, and that it is charming. I shall be much obliged to you for the first thought, but desire you will retain only the second, for it is Mr. Gray's, and not

Your humble servant's,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XI

LETTER XII

Windsor, October 24, 1746.

WELL, Harry, Scotland is the last place on earth I should have thought of for turning any body poet: but I begin to forgive it half its treasons in favour of your verses, for I suppose you don't think I am the dupe of the highland story that you tell me: the only use I shall make of it is to commend the lines to you, as if they really were a Scot'sman's. There is a melancholy harmony in them that is charming, and a delicacy in the thoughts that no Scotchman is capable of, though a *Scotchwoman* might inspire it. I beg both for Cynthia's sake and my own that you would continue your *de Tristibus*, till I have an opportunity of seeing your muse, and the of rewarding her: *Reprends ta musette, berger amoureux!* If Cynthia has ever travelled ten miles in fairy land, she must be wondrous content with the person and qualifications of her knight, who in future story will be read of thus: Elmedorus was tall and perfectly well made, his face oval, and features regularly handsome, but not effeminate; his complexion sentimentally brown, with not much colour; his teeth fine, and forehead agreeably low, round which his black hair curled naturally and beautifully. His eyes were black too, but had nothing of fierce or insolent; on the contrary, a certain melancholy swimmingness that described hopeless

¹ Here follows Mr. Gray's Ode on the distant prospect of Eton college.

love,

love, rather than a natural amorous languish. His exploits in war, where he always fought by the side of the renowned Paladine William of England, have endeared his memory to all admirers of true chivalry, as the mournful elegies which he poured out among the desert rocks of Caledonia^{*} in honour of the peerless lady and his heart's idol, the incomparable Cynthia, will for ever preserve his name in the flowery annals of poesy.

What a pity it is I was not born in the golden age of Louis the fourteenth, when it was not only the fashion to write folios, but to read them too! Or rather, it is a pity the same fashion don't subsist now, when one need not be at the trouble of invention, nor of turning the whole Roman history into romance, for want of proper heroes. Your campaign in Scotland rolled out and well be-epitheted would make a pompous work, and make one's fortune; at six-pence a number, one should have all the damsels within the liberties for subscribers: whereas now, if one has a mind to be read, one must write metaphysical poems in blank verse, which though I own to be still easier have not half the imagination of romances, and are dull without any agreeable absurdity. Only think of the gravity of this wise age, that have exploded *Cleopatra and Pharamond*, and approve *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, *The Art of preserving Health*, and *Leonidas*!—I beg the age's pardon: it has done approving these poems, and has forgot them.

Adieu, dear Harry! Thank you seriously for the poem. I am going to town for the birth-day, and shall return hither till the parliament meets; I suppose there is no doubt of our meeting then.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. Now you are at Stirling, if you should meet with Drummond's History of the five king Jameses, pray look it over. I have lately read it, and like it much. It is wrote in imitation of Livy, the style masculine, and the whole very sensible—only he ascribes the misfortunes of one reign to the then king's loving architecture, and

“In trim gardens taking pleasure.”

^{*} Mr. Conway was now in Scotland with the duke of Cumberland, to whom he had been appointed aide-du-camp in the year 1743.

LETTER XIII.

Arlington-street, April 16, 1747.

DEAR HARRY,

WE are all fkyrockets and bonfires to-night for your last year's victory¹; but if you have a mind to perpetuate yourselves in the calendar, you must take care to refresh your conquests. I was yesterday out of town, and the very signs as I passed through the villages made me make very quaint reflections on the mortality of fame and popularity. I observed how the duke's head had succeeded almost universally to admiral Vernon's, as his had left but few traces of the duke of Ormond's. I pondered these things in my heart, and said unto myself, Surely all glory is but as a sign²!

You have heard that old Lovat's³ tragedy is over: it has been succeeded by a little farce, containing the humours of the duke of Newcastle and his man Stone. The first event was a squabble between his grace and the sheriff about holding up the head on the scaffold—a custom that has been disused, and which the sheriff would not comply with, as he received no order in writing. Since that the duke has burst ten yards of breeches strings⁴ about the body, which was to be sent into Scotland; but it seems it is customary for vast numbers to rise to attend the most trivial burial. The duke, who is always at least as much frightened at doing right as at doing wrong, was three days before he got courage enough to order the burying in the Tower. I must tell you an excessive good story of George Selwyn: Some women were scolding him for going to see the execution, and asked him, how he could be such a barbarian to see the head cut off? "Nay," says he, "if that was such a crime, I am sure I have made amends, for I went to see it sewed on again." When he was at the undertaker's, as soon as they had stitched him together, and were going to put the body into the coffin, George, in my lord chancellor's voice, said, "My lord Lovat, your lordship may rise." My lady T—— has picked up a little stable-boy in the Tower,

¹ The battle of Culloden.² Simon Frazer lord Lovat, beheaded on Tower-hill the 9th of April 1747.³ Soon after Mr. Walpole published a paper in *The World* upon this subject.⁴ Alluding to a trick of the duke of Newcastle's.

which

TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY. 27

which the warders have put upon her for a natural son of lord Kilmar-
nock's, and taken him into her own house. You need not tell Mr. T.
this from me.

We have had a great and fine day in the house on the second reading the
bill for taking away the heritable jurisdictions in Scotland. Lyttelton¹ made
the finest oration imaginable; the solicitor general², the new advocate³,
and Hume Campbell⁴, particularly the last, spoke excessively well for it,
and Oswald⁵ against it. The majority was 233 against 102. Pitt⁶ was not
there; the duchess of Queensberry had ordered him to have the gout.

I will give you a commission once more to tell lord Bury⁷ that he has
quite dropped me: if I thought he would take me up again, I would write
to him; a message would encourage me. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XIV.

Twickenham, June 8, 1747.

YOU perceive by my date that I am got into a new camp, and have left
my tub at Windsor. It is a little play-thing-house that I got out of Mrs.
Chenevix's⁸ shop, and is the prettiest bawble you ever saw. It is set in ena-
melled meadows, with philigree hedges:

A small Euphrates through the piece is roll'd;

And little finches wave their wings in gold.

Two delightful roads, that you would call dusty, supply me continually with
coaches and chaises: barges as solemn as barons of the exchequer move under

¹ Sir George, afterwards created lord Lyttelton.

² William Murray, afterwards earl of Mansfield.

³ William Grant, lord advocate of Scotland.

⁴ Only brother to the earl of Marchmont.

⁵ James Oswald, afterwards a lord of trade, and vice-treasurer of Ireland.

⁶ William Pitt, afterwards earl of Chatham.

⁷ George Keppel, eldest son of William earl of Albemarle, whom he succeeded in the title in 1755. He was now, together with Mr. Conway, aide-du-camp to the duke of Cumberland.

⁸ A famous toy-shop.

my window; Richmond-hill and Ham-walks bound my prospect; but, thank God! the Thames is between me and the duchess of Queensberry. Dowagers as plenty as flounders inhabit all around, and Pope's ghost is just now skimming under my window by a most poetical moonlight. I have about land enough to keep such a farm as Noah's, when he set up in the ark with a pair of each kind; but my cottage is rather cleaner than I believe his was after they had been cooped up together forty days. The Chenevixes had tricked it out for themselves: up two pair of stairs is what they call Mr. Chenevix's library, furnished with three maps, one shelf, a bust of sir Isaac Newton, and a lame telescope without any glasses. Lord John Sackville *predeceased* me here, and instituted certain games called *cricketalia*, which have been celebrated this very evening in honour of him in a neighbouring meadow.

You will think I have removed my philosophy from Windsor with my tea-things hither; for I am writing to you in all this tranquillity while a parliament is bursting about my ears. You know it is going to be dissolved: I am told, you are taken care of, though I don't know where, nor whether any body that chooses you will quarrel with me because he does choose you, as that little bug ——— did; one of the calamities of my life which I have bore as abominably well as I do most about which I don't care. They say the prince has taken up two hundred thousand pounds, to carry elections which he won't carry:—he had much better have saved it to buy the parliament after it is chosen. A new set of peers are in embryo, to add more dignity to the silence of the house of lords.

I make no remarks on your campaign¹, because, as you say, you do nothing at all; which, though very proper nutriment for a thinking head, does not do quite so well to write upon. If any one of you can but contrive to be shot upon your post, it is all we desire, shall look upon it as a great curiosity, and will take care to set up a monument to the person so slain, as we are doing by vote to captain ———, who was killed at the beginning of the action in the Mediterranean four years ago. In the present dearth of glory, he is canonized, though, poor man! he had been tried twice the year before for cowardice.

I could tell you much election-news, none else; though not being tho-

¹ Mr. Conway was in Flanders with William duke of Cumberland.

roughly attentive to so important a subject, as to be sure one ought to be, I might now and then mistake, and give you a candidate for Durham in place of one for Southampton, or name the returning-officer instead of the candidate. In general, I believe, it is much as usual—those sold in detail that afterwards will be sold in the representation—the ministers bribing jacobites to choose friends of their own—the name of well-wishers to the present establishment, and patriots, outbidding ministers that they may make the better market of their own patriotism:—in short, all England, under some name or other, is just now to be bought and sold; though, whenever we become posterity and forefathers, we shall be in high repute for wisdom and virtue. My great great grand-children will figure me with a white beard down to my girdle; and Mr. Pitt's will believe him unspotted enough to have walked over nine hundred hot ploughshares, without hurting the sole of his foot. How merry my ghost will be, and shake its ears to hear itself quoted as a person of consummate prudence!—Adieu, dear Harry!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R X V .

Strawberry-hill, August 29, 1748.

DEAR HARRY,

WHATEVER you may think, a campaign at Twickenham furnishes as little matter for a letter as an abortive one in Flanders. I can't say indeed that my generals wear black wigs, but they have long full-bottomed hoods which cover as little entertainment to the full.

There's general my lady Castlecomer, and general my lady dowager Ferrers! Why do you think I can extract more out of them than you can out of Hawley or Honeywood? Your old women dress, go to the duke's levee, see that the soldiers cock their hats right, sleep after dinner, and soak with their led captains till bed-time, and tell a thousand lies of what they never did in their youth. Change hats for head-clothes, the rounds for visits,

visits, and led captains for toad-eaters, and the life is the very same. In short, these are the people I live in the midst of, though not with; and it is for want of more important histories that I have wrote to you so seldom; not, I give you my word, from the least negligence. My present and sole occupation is planting, in which I have made great progress, and talk very learnedly with the nurserymen, except that now and then a lettuce run to seed overturns all my botany, as I have more than once taken it for a curious West-Indian flowering shrub. Then the deliberation with which trees grow, is extremely inconvenient to my natural impatience. I lament living in so barbarous an age, when we are come to so little perfection in gardening. I am persuaded that a hundred and fifty years hence it will be as common to remove oaks a hundred and fifty years old, as it is now to transplant tulip-roots. I have even begun a treatise or panegyric on the great discoveries made by posterity in all arts and sciences; wherein I shall particularly descant on the great and cheap convenience of making trout-rivers—one of the improvements which Mrs. Kerwood wondered Mr. Hedges would not make at his country-house, but which was not then quite so common as it will be. I shall talk of a secret for roasting a wild boar and a whole pack of hounds alive, without hurting them, so that the whole chace may be brought up to table; and for this secret, the duke of Newcastle's grandson, if he can ever get a son, is to give a hundred thousand pounds. Then the delightfulness of having whole groves of humming-birds, tame tigers taught to fetch and carry, pocket spying-glasses to see all that is doing in China, with a thousand other toys, which we now look upon as impracticable, and which pert posterity would laugh in one's face for staring at, while they are offering rewards for perfecting discoveries, of the principles of which we have not the least conception! If ever this book should come forth, I must expect to have all the learned in arms against me, who measure all knowledge backward: some of them have discovered symptoms of all arts in Homer; and Pineda¹ had so much faith in the accomplishments of his ancestors, that he believed Adam understood all sciences but politics. But as these great champions for our forefathers are dead, and Boileau not alive to hitch me into a verse with Perrault, I am determined to admire the learning of posterity, especially being convinced that half our

¹ Pineda was a Spanish jesuit, and a professor of holy scriptures, besides an universal history of the church. He died 1637, after writing voluminous commentaries upon several books of the

present knowledge sprung from discovering the errors of what had formerly been called so. I don't think I shall ever make any great discoveries myself, and therefore shall be content to propose them to my descendents, like my lord Bacon, who, as doctor Shaw says very prettily in his preface to Boyle, *had the art of inventing arts*: or rather like a marquis of Worcester, of whom I have seen a little book which he calls *A century of inventions*, where he has set down a hundred machines to do impossibilities with, and not a single direction how to make the machines themselves.

If I happen to be less punctual in my correspondence than I intend to be, you must conclude I am writing my book, which being designed for a panegyric will cost me a great deal of trouble. The dedication, with your leave, shall be addressed to your son that is coming, or, with my lady A——'s leave, to your ninth son, who will be unborn nearer to the time I am writing of; always provided that she does not bring three at once, like my lady B——.

Well! I have here set you the example of writing nonsense when one has nothing to say, and shall take it ill if you don't keep up the correspondence on the same foot. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVI.

Strawberry-hill, Oct: 6, 1748.

DEAR HARRY,

I AM sorry our wishes clash so much. Besides that I have no natural inclination for the parliament, it will particularly disturb me now in the middle of all my planting; for which reason I have never inquired when it will meet, and cannot help you to guess—but I should think not hastily—for I believe the peace, at least the evacuations are not in so prosperous a way

as:

as to be ready to make any figure in the king's speech. But I speak from a distance; it may all be very toward: our ministers enjoy the consciousness of their wisdom, as the good do of their virtue, and take no pains to make it shine before men. In the mean time we have several collateral emoluments from the pacification: all our milliners, taylor, tavern-keepers, and young gentlemen are tiding to France for our improvement and luxury; and as I foresee we shall be told on their return that we have lived in a total state of blindness for these six years, and gone absolutely retrograde to all true taste in every particular, I have already begun to practise walking on my head, and doing every thing the wrong way. Then Charles Frederick has turned all his virtù into fire-works, and, by his influence at the Ordnance, has prepared such a spectacle for the proclamation of the peace as is to surpass all its predecessors of bouncing memory. It is to open with a concert of fifteen hundred hands, and conclude with so many hundred thousand crackers all set to music, that all the men killed in the war are to be wakened with the crash, as if it was the day of judgment, and fall a dancing, like the troops in the Rehearsal. I wish you could see him making squibs of his papillotes, and bronzed over with a patina of gunpowder, and talking himself still hoarser on the superiority that his firework will have over the Roman naumachia.

I am going to dinner with lady Sophia Thomas at Hampton-court, where I was to meet the Cardigans; but I this minute receive a message that the duchess of Montagu¹ is extremely ill, which I am much concerned for on lady Cardigan's² account, whom I grow every day more in love with; you may imagine, not her person, which is far from improved lately: but since I have been here, I have lived much with them; and, as George Montagu³ says, *in all my practice* I never met a better understanding, nor more really estimable qualities; such a dignity in her way of thinking, so little idea of any thing mean or ridiculous, and such proper contempt for both!

¹ She was mother to lady Cardigan, and Brudenell earl of Cardigan, afterwards created daughter to the great duke of Marlborough. duke of Montagu.

² Nephew to the earl of Halifax, and elder brother of colonel, afterwards sir Charles John duke of Montagu and wife of George Montagu. K. B.

Adieu!

Adieu! I must go dress for dinner, and you perceive that I wish I had, but have nothing to tell you.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVII.

Strawberry-hill, May 5, 1753.

THOUGH my letter bears a country date, I am only a passenger here, just come to overlook my workmen, and repose myself upon some shavings, after the fatigues of the season. You know balls and masquerades always abound as the weather begins to be too hot for them, and this has been quite a spring-tide of diversion. Not that I am so abandoned as to have partaken of all; I neither made the Newmarket campaign under the duke^a, nor danced at any ball, nor *looked well* at any masquerade: I begin to submit to my years, and amuse myself—only just as much as I like. Indeed, when parties and politics are at an end, an Englishman may be allowed not to be always grave and out of humour. His royal highness has won as many hearts at Newmarket as he lost in Scotland; he played deep, and handsomely; received every body at his table with the greatest good humour, and permitted the familiarities of the place with ease and sense.

There have been balls at the duchess of Norfolk's, at Holland-house, and lord Granville's, and a subscription masquerade: the dresses were not very fine, not much invention, nor any very absurd. I find I am telling you extreme trifles; but you desired me to write, and there literally happens nothing of greater moment. If I can fill out a sheet even in this way, I will: for at Sligo^b perhaps I may appear a journalist of consequence.

There is a madame de Mezieres arrived from Paris, who has said a

^a William duke of Cumberland.

^b Mr. Conway was then with his regiment quartered at Sligo in Ireland.

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thousand impertinent things to my lady Albemarle, on my lord's not letting her come to Paris¹. I should not repeat this to you, only to introduce George Selwyn's account of this woman, who, he says, is mother to the princess of Montauban, grandmother to madame de Brionne, sister to general Oglethorpe, and was laundress to the duchess of Portsmouth.

Sir Charles Williams, never very happy at panegyric, has made a distich on the queen of Hungary, which I send you for the curiosity, not the merit of it:

O regina orbis prima & pulcherrima, ridens
Es Venus, incedens Juno, Minerva loquens.

It is infinitely admired at Vienna, but baron Munchausen has received a translation of it into German in six verses, which are still more applauded.

There is another volume published of lord Bolinbroke's; it contains his famous letter to sir William Windham, with an admirable description of the pretender and his court, and a very poor justification of his own treachery to that party; a flimsy unfinished state of the nation, written at the end of his life, and the common-place tautology of an old politician, who lives out of the world and writes from newspapers; and a superficial letter to Mr. Pope, as an introduction to his Essays, which are printed, but not yet published.

What shall I say to you more? You see how I am forced to tack paragraphs together, without any connection or consequence! Shall I tell you one more idle story, and will you just recollect that you once concerned yourself enough about the heroine of it, to excuse my repeating such a piece of tittle-tattle? This heroine is lady ———, the hero is—not entirely of royal blood; at least I have never heard that Lodowie the toothdrawer was in any manner descended from the house of Bourbon. Don't be alarmed: this plebeian operator is not in the catalogue of your successors. How the lady was the aggressor is not known; 'tis only conjectured that French politeness and French interestedness could never have gone such

¹ Lord Albemarle was then ambassador at Paris.

lengths without mighty provocation. The first instance of the tooth-drawer's ungentle behaviour was on hearing it said that lady — was to have her four girls drawn by Liotard; which was wondered at, as his price is so great—"Oh!" said Lodomie, "*chacune paie pour la sienne.*" Soon after this insult, there was some dispute about payments, and tooth-powder, and divers messages passed. At last the lady wrote a card, to say she did not understand such impertinent answers being given to her chairman by an arracheur de dents. The angry little gentleman, with as much intrepidity as if he had drawn out all her teeth, tore the card in five slits, and returned it with this astonishing sentence, "I return you your impertinent card, and desire you will pay me what you owe me." All I know more is, that the tooth-drawer still lives; and so do many lords and gentlemen, formerly thought the slaves of the offended fair one's will and passions, and among others, to his great shame,

Your sincere friend,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVIII.

Strawberryhill, May 24, 1753

IT is well you are married! How would my lady A—— have liked to be asked in a parish-church for three Sundays running? I really believe she would have worn her weeds for ever, rather than have passed through so impudent a ceremony! What do you think?—But you will want to know the interpretation of this preamble. Why, there is a new bill, which, under the notion of preventing clandestine marriages, has made such a general rummage and reform in the office of matrimony, that every Strephon and Chloe, every dowager and her H——, will have as many impediments and formalities to undergo as a treaty of peace. Lord Bath invented this bill, but had drawn it so ill, that the chancellor was forced to draw a new one—

Philip Yorke earl of Hardwicke.

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and then grew so fond of his own creature, that he has crammed it down the throats of both houses—though they gave many a gulp before they could swallow it. The duke of Bedford attacked it first with great spirit and mastery, but had little support, though the duke of Newcastle did not vote. The lawyers were all ordered to nurse it through our house; but, except the poor attorney general*, who is nurse indeed to all intents and purpose, and did amply gossip over it, not one of them said a word. Nugent† shone extremely in opposition to the bill, and, though every now and then on the precipice of absurdity, kept clear of it, with great humour and wit and argument, and was unanswered—Yet we were beat. Last Monday it came into the committee: Charles Townshend acted a very good speech with great cleverness, and drew a picture of his own story and his father's tyranny, with at least as much parts as modesty. Mr. Fox‡ mumbled the chancellor and his lawyers, and pinned the plan of the bill upon a pamphlet he had found of Dr. Gally's, where the doctor, recommending the French scheme of matrimony, says; *It was found that fathers were too apt to forgive.* The gospel, I thought, said Mr. Fox, enjoined forgiveness; but pious Dr. Gally thinks fathers are too apt to forgive. Mr. Pelham, extremely in his opinion against the bill, and in his inclination too, was forced to rivet it, and, without speaking one word for it, taught the house how to vote for it; and it was carried against the chairman's leaving the chair by 165 to 84.

This is all the news I know, or at least was all when I came out of town; for I left the tinkering of the bill, and came hither last Tuesday to my workmen. I flatter myself I shall get into tolerable order to receive my lady A—— and you at your return from Sligo, from whence I have received your letter, and where I hope you have had my first. I say nothing of the exile of the parliament of Paris, for I know no more than you will see in the public papers; only, as we are going to choose a new parliament, we could not do better than choose the exiles: we could scarce choose braver or honest men. I say as little of mademoiselle Murphy*, for I conclude you hear nothing but her health drank in whisky. Don't all the

* Sir Dudley Ryder.

† Robert Nugent, afterwards created lord Clare and earl Nugent.

‡ Henry Fox, afterwards created lord Holland.

4 An Irish woman who was for a short time mistress to Louis XV.

naked Irish flatter themselves with preferment, and claim relation with her? Miss Chudleigh says there is some sense in belonging to a king who turns off an old mistress when he has got a new one.

Arlington-Street, May 29.

I AM come to town for a day or two, and find that the marriage bill has not only lasted till now in the committee, but has produced, or at least disclosed, extreme heats. Mr. Fox and Mr. Pelham have had very high words on every clause, and the former has renewed his attacks on the chancellor under the name of Dr. Gally. Yesterday on the nullity clause they sat till half an hour after three in the morning, having just then had a division on adjournment, which was rejected by the ministry by above 80 to 70. The speaker*, who had spoken well against the clause, was so misrepresented by the attorney general, that there was danger of a skirmishing between the great wig and the coil, the former having given a flat lye to the latter. Mr. Fox, I am told, outdid himself for spirit, and severity on the chancellor and the lawyers. I say I am told; for I was content with having been beat twice, and did not attend. The heats between the two ministers were far from cooling by the length of the debate. Adieu! You did little expect in these times, and at this season, to have heard such a parliamentary history! The bill is not near finished; Mr. Fox has declared he will dispute every inch of ground. I hope he won't be banished to Pontoise*. I shall write to you no more, so pray return. I hear most favourable accounts of my lady A—.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* Arthur Onslow.

* The parliament of Paris having espoused the cause of religious liberty, and apprehended several priests who by the authority of the arch-

bishop of Paris and other prelates had refused the sacraments to those who would not subscribe to the bull Unigenitus, were banished by the king, Louis XV. to Pontoise. E.

LETTER

LETTER XIX

Strawberry-hill, Saturday July 6, 1754.

YOUR letter certainly stopped to drink somewhere by the way, I suppose with the hearty hostess at the Windmill; for, though written on Wednesday, it arrived here but this morning: it could not have travelled more deliberately in the speaker's body-coach. I am concerned, because, your fishmonger not being arrived, I fear you have staid for my answer. The fish¹ are apprized that they are to *ride* over to Park-place, and are ready booted and spurred; and the moment their pad arrives, they shall set forth. I would accompany them on a pillion, if I were not waiting for lady Mary², who has desired to bring her poor little sick girl here for a few days to try the air. You know how courteous a knight I am to distressed virgins of five years old; and that my castle-gates are always open to them³. You will, I am sure, accept this excuse for some days; and as soon as ever my hospitality is completed, I will be ready to obey your summons, though you should send a water-pot for me. I am in no fear of not finding you in perfect verdure; for the sun, I believe, is gone a great way off to some races or other, where his horses are to run for a king's plate: we have not heard of him in this neighbourhood. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Gold-fish.² Lady Mary Churchill.³ Mr. Conway's only daughter had been left

with Mr. Walpole at Strawberry-hill, when he and lady Ailesbury went to Ireland with his regiment.

LETTER XX.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 23, 1755.

DEAR HARRY,

NEVER make me excuses for a letter that tells me so many agreeable things as your last; that you are got well to Dublin; that you are all well, and that you have accommodated all your politics to your satisfaction—and I may be allowed to say, greatly to your credit. What could you tell me that would please me so much?

When I have indulged a little my joy for your success and honour, it is natural to consider the circumstances you have told me; and you will easily excuse me if I am not quite as much satisfied with the conduct of your late antagonists, as I am with yours. You have tranquillized a nation, have repaired your master's honour, and secured the peace of your administration;—but what shall one say to the speaker, Mr. Malone and the others? Don't they confess that they have gone the greatest lengths, and risked the safety of their country on a mere personal pique? If they did not contend for profit, like our patriots (and you don't tell me that they have made any lucrative stipulations), yet it is plain that their ambition had been wounded, and that they resented their power being crossed. But I, who am whig to the backbone, indeed in the strictest sense of the word, feel hurt in a tenderer point, and which you, who are a minister, must not allow me: I am offended at their agreeing to an address that avows such deference for prerogative, and that is to protest so deeply against having intended to attack it. However rebel this may sound at your court, my Gothic spirit is hurt; I do not love such loyal expressions from a parliament. I do not so much consider myself writing to Dublin castle, as from Strawberry castle, where you know how I love to enjoy my liberty. I give myself the airs, in my nutshell, of an old baron, and am tempted almost to say with an old earl of Norfolk, who was a very free speaker at least, if he was not an excellent poet,

* Mr. Conway was now secretary of state to the marquis of Hartington, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

When

40 **LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE**

When I am in my castle of Bungey,
Situat upon the river Waveney,
I ne care for the king of Cockney.

I have been roving about Hampshire, have been at Winchester and Southampton and twenty places, and have been but one day in London—consequently know as little news as if I had been shut up in Bungey castle. Rumours there are of great bickerings and uneasinesses; but I don't believe there will be any bloodshed of places, except Legge's¹, which nobody seems willing to take—I mean as a sinecure. His majesty of Cockney is returned exceedingly well, but grown a little out of humour at finding that we are not so much pleased with all the Russians and Hessians that he has hired to recover the Ohio. We are an ungrateful people!

Make a great many compliments for me to my lady A——. I own I am in pain about Missy². As my lady is a little coquette herself, and loves crowds and admiration and a court life, it will be very difficult for her to keep a strict eye upon Missy. The Irish are very forward and bold;—I say no more; but it would hurt you both extremely to have her marry herself idly; and I think my lord chancellor has not extended his matrimonial foresight to Ireland. However, I have much confidence in Mrs. Elizabeth Jones³: I am sure, when they were here, she would never let Missy whisper with a boy that was old enough to speak.

Adieu! As the winter advances, and plots thicken, I will write you letters that shall have a little more in them than this. In the mean time I am going to the Bath, not for my health, you know I never am ill, but for my amusement. I never was there, and at present there are several of my acquaintance. The French academy have chosen my lord Chesterfield, and he has written them a letter of thanks that is the finest composition in the world: indeed, I was told so by those who have not seen it; but they would have told me so if they had seen it, whether it was the finest or the worst; suffices it to be his!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Henry Bilson Legge, second son of William earl of Dartmouth; he was chancellor of the exchequer.
² Anne Seymour Conway, only child of Mr. Conway and lady Ailesbury, then an infant.
³ Miss Conway's nurse.

LETTER XXI.

Arlington-street, Nov. 15, 1755.

I PROMISED you histories, and there are many people that take care I should have it in my power to keep my word. To begin in order, I should tell you, that there were 289 members at the Cockpit meeting, the greatest number ever known there: but Mr. Pitt, who is too great a general to regard numbers, especially when there was a probability of no great harmony between the commanders, did not however postpone giving battle. The engagement was not more decisive than long: we sat till within a quarter of five in the morning; an uninterrupted serious debate from before two. Lord Hillsborough moved the address, and very injudiciously supposed an opposition. Martin, Legge's secretary, moved to omit in the address the indirect approbation of the treaties, and the direct assurances of protection to Hanover. These questions were at length divided; and against Pitt's inclination, the last, which was the least unpopular, was first decided by a majority of 311 against 105. Many then went away; and on the next division the numbers were 290 to 89. These are the general outlines. The detail of the speeches, which were very long, and some extremely fine, it would be impossible to give you in any compass. On the side of the opposition (which I must tell you by the way, though it set out decently, seems extremely resolved) the speakers (I name them in their order) were: the 3d Colebrook, Martin, Northey, sir Richard Lyttelton, Dodding-ton, George Grenville, sir F. Dashwood, Beckford, sir G. Lee, Legge, Potter, Dr. Hay, Geo. Townshend, lord Egmont, Pitt, and admiral Ver-non: on the other side were, lord Hillsborough, Obrien, young Stanhope, Hamilton, Alstone, Ellis, lord Barrington, sir G. Lyttelton, Nugent, Mur-ray, sir T. Robinson, my uncle, and Mr. Fox. As short as I can, I will give you an account of them. Sir Richard, Beckford, Potter, G. Townshend, the admiral of course, Martin, and Stanhope were very bad: Dodding-ton was well, but very *acceding*: Dr. Hay by no means answers his reputa-tion; it was easy, but not striking. Lord Egmont was doubling, absurd, and obscure. Sir G. Lee and lord Barrington were much disliked; I don't think, so deservedly. Poor A—— was mad, and spoke ten times to order. Sir George, our friend, was dull and timid. Legge was the latter. Nu-

Sir George Lyttelton.

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gent roared, and sir Thomas rumbled. Mr. Fox was extremely fatigued, and did little. Geo. Grenville's was very fine and much beyond himself, and very pathetic. The attorney general¹ in the same style, and very artful, was still finer. Then there was a young Mr. Hamilton² who spoke for the first time, and was at once perfection: his speech was set, and full of antithesis, but those antitheses were full of argument: indeed his speech was the most argumentative of the whole day; and he broke through the regularity of his own composition, answered other people, and fell into his own track again with the greatest ease. His figure is advantageous, his voice strong and clear, his manner spirited, and the whole with the ease of an established speaker. You will ask, what could be beyond this? Nothing, but what was beyond what ever was, and that was Pitt! He spoke at past one, for an hour and thirty-five minutes: there was more humour, wit, vivacity, finer language, more boldness, in short, more astonishing perfections than even you, who are used to him, can conceive. He was not abusive, yet very attacking on all sides: he ridiculed my lord Hillsborough, crushed poor sir George, terrified the attorney, lashed my lord Granville, painted my lord of Newcastle, attacked Mr. Fox, and even hinted up to the duke³. A few of the Scotch were in the minority, and most of the princess's people, not all: all the duke of Bedford's in the majority. He himself spoke in the other house for the address (though professing uncertainty about the treaties⁴ themselves), against my lord Temple and lord Halifax, without a division. My lord Talbot was neuter; he and I were of a party: my opinion was strongly with the opposition; I could not vote for the treaties; I would not vote against Mr. Fox. It is ridiculous perhaps, at the end of such a debate, to give an account of my own silence; and as it is of very little consequence what I did, so it is very unlike me to justify myself. You know how much I hate *professions* of integrity; and my pride is generally too great to care what the generality of people say of me: but your heart is good enough to make me wish you should think well of mine.

You will want to know what is to be the fate of the ministry in opposition: but that I can't tell you. I don't believe they have determined what

¹ William Murray, afterwards lord Mansfield.

² The duke of Cumberland.

³ William Gerard Hamilton. It was this speech which, not being followed, as was naturally expected, by repeated exhibitions of similar eloquence, acquired him the name of *single* speech Hamilton. E.

⁴ Treaties of subsidy with the landgrave of Hesse and the empress of Russia for the defence of Hanover.

TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY. 43

to do, more than oppose, nor that it is determined what to do with them. Though it is clear that it is very humiliating to leave them in place, you may conceive several reasons why it is not eligible to dismiss them. You know where you are, how easy it is to buy an opposition who have not places; but tell us what to do with an opposition that has places? If you say, Turn them out; I answer, That is not the way to quiet any opposition, or a ministry so constituted as ours at present. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXII.

Arlington-street, January 24, 1756.

OH! sir, I shall take care how I ever ask favours of you again! It was with great reluctance that I brought myself to ask this: you took no notice of my request; and I flattered myself that I was punished for having applied to you so much against my inclination. Just as I grew confirmed in the pride of being mortified, I hear that you have outgone my application, and in the kindest manner in the world have given the young man a pair of colours. It would have been unpleasant enough to be refused; but to obtain more than one asked is the most provoking thing in the world! I was prepared to be very grateful if you had done just what I desired; but I declare I have no thanks ready for a work of supererogation. If there ever was a saint that went to heaven for mere gratitude, which I am persuaded is a much more uncommon qualification than martyrdom, I must draw upon his hoard of merit to acquit myself. You will at least get thus much by this charming manner of obliging me: I look upon myself as doubly obliged: and when it cost me so much to ask one favour, and I find myself in debt for two, I shall scarce run in tick for a third.

What adds to my vexation is, that I wrote to you but the night before last. Unless I could return your kindness with equal grace, it would not be very decent to imitate you by beginning to take no notice of it; and therefore you must away with this letter upon the back of the former.

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44 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

We had yesterday some history in the house: Beckford produced an accusation in form against admiral K—— on his way to an impeachment. Governor Verres was a puny culprit in comparison! Jamaica indeed has not quite so many costly temples and ivory statues, &c. as Sicily had: but what K—— could not or had not a propensity to commit in rapine and petty larceny, he has made up in tyranny. The papers are granted, and we are all going to turn jurymen. The rest of the day was spent in a kind of avoirdupoise war. Our friend sir George Lyttelton opened the budget; well enough in general, but was strangely bewildered in the figures; he stumbled over millions, and dwelt pompously upon farthings. Pitt attacked him pretty warmly on mortgaging the sinking fund: sir George kept up his spirit, and returned the attack on eloquence. It was entertaining enough, but ended in high compliments; and the division was 231 to 56.

Your friend lady ——, not to let the town quite lapse into politics, has entertained it with a new scene. She was t'other night at the play with her court; viz. miss ——, lord Barnard, monsieur St. Simon, and her favourite footman Richard, whom, under pretence of keeping places, she always keeps in her box the whole time to see the play at his ease. Mr. Stanley, colonel Vernon, and Mr. Vaughan arrived at the very end of the farce, and could find no room, but a row and half in lady ——'s box. Richard denied them entrance very impertinently. Mr. Stanley took him by the hair of his head, dragged him into the passage, and thrashed him. The heroine was outrageous—the heroes not at all so. She sent Richard to Fielding for a warrant—He would not grant it—and so it ended—And so must I, for here is company. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

My letter would have been *much cleverer*, but George Montague has been chattering by me the whole time, and insists on my making you his compliments.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

Arlington-street, Feb. 12, 1756.

I WILL not write to my lady A. to-night, nor pretend to answer the prettiest letter in the world, when I am out of spirits. I am very unhappy about poor Mr. Mann*, who I fear is in a deep consumption: the doctors do not give him over, and the symptoms are certainly a little mended this week; but you know how fallacious that distemper is, and how unwise it would be to trust to it! As he is at Richmond, I pass a great deal of my time out of town to be near him, and so may have missed some news; but I will tell you all I know.

The house of commons is dwindled into a very dialogue between Pitt and Fox—one even begins to want admiral Vernon again for variety. Sometimes it is a little piquant; in which though Pitt has attacked, Fox has generally had the better. These three or four last days we have been solely upon the Pennsylvanian regiment, bickering, and but once dividing 165 to 57. We are got but past the first reading yet. We want the French to put a little vivacity into us. The duke of Newcastle has expected them every hour: he was terribly alarmed t'other night; on his table he found a mysterious card with only these words, *Charles is very well, and is expected in England every day*. It was plainly some secret friend that advertised him of the pretender's approaching arrival. He called up all the servants, ransacked the whole house to know who had been in his dressing-room:—at last it came out to be an answer from the duchess of Queensberry to the duchess of Newcastle about lord Charles Douglas. Don't it put you in mind of my lord treasurer Portland in Clarendon, *Remember Cæsar!*

The French have promised letters of noblesse to whoever fits out even a little privateer. I could not help a melancholy smile when my lady A. talked of coming over soon. I fear major-general you will scarce be permitted to return to your plough at Park-place, when we grudge every man that is left at the plough. Between the French and the earthquakes*, you

* Galfridus Mann, twin brother to sir Horace Mann, the envoy at Florence: he died the end of this year.

* The dreadful earthquake which had taken place at Lisbon towards the end of the preceding year.

have.

have no notion how good we are grown; nobody makes a suit of clothes now but of sackcloth turned up with ashes. The fast was kept so devoutly, that Dick Edgumbe*, finding a very lean hazard at White's, said with a sigh, "Lord, how the times are degenerated! Formerly a fast would have brought every body hither; now it keeps every body away!" A few nights before, two men walking up the Strand, one said to t'other, "Look how red the sky is! Well, thank God! there is to be no masquerade!"

My lord A. does not keep a fast; he is going to marry one of the plump C—s:—they call him the noble lord upon the woolfack.

The duchess of Norfolk has opened her new house: all the earth was there last Tuesday. You would have thought there had been a comet, every body was gaping in the air and treading on one another's toes. In short, you never saw such a scene of magnificence and taste. The tapestry, the embroidered bed, the illumination, the glasses, the lightness and novelty of the ornaments, and the ceilings, are delightful. She gives three Tuesdays, would you could be at one! Somebody asked my lord Rockingham afterwards at White's, what was there? He said, "Oh! there was all the company afraid of the duchess, and the duke afraid of all the company."—It was not a bad picture.

My lady A. flatters me extremely about my World, but it has brought me into a peck of troubles. In short, the good-natured town have been pleased to lend me a meaning, and call my lord Bute, *sir Eustace*†. I need not say how ill the story tallies to what they apply it; but I do vow to you, that so far from once entering into my imagination, my only apprehension was, that I should be suspected of flattery for the compliment to the princess in the former part. It is the more cruel, because you know it is just the thing in the world on which one must not defend one's self. If I might, I can prove that the paper was writ last Easter, long before this history was ever mentioned, and flung by, because I did not like it: I mentioned it one night to my lady Hervey, which was the occasion of its being printed.

I beg you will tell my lady A. that I am sorry she could not discover any

* Richard Edgumbe second lord Edgumbe.

† Sir Eustace Drawbridgetourt. See World,

Nº 160, 5th vol.

wit in Mrs. Hufley's making a septleva. I know I never was so vain of any wit in my life as in winning a thousand leva and two five hundred levas.

You would laugh if you saw in the midst of what trumpery I am writing. Two porters have just brought home my purchases from Mrs. Kennon the midwife's sale. Brobdignag combs, old broken pots, pans, and pipkins, a lanthorn of scraped oyster-shells, scymitars, Turkish pipes, Chinese baskets, &c. &c. My servants think my head is turned; I hope not: it is all to be called the personal estate and moveables of my great great grandmother, and to be repositied at Strawberry. I believe you think my letter as strange a miscellany as my purchases.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I forgot, that I was outbid for Oliver Cromwell's nightcap.

LETTER XXIV.

Arlington-street, March 4, 1756.

DEAR HARRY,

I HAVE received so kind and so long a letter from you, and so kind too because so long, that I feel I shall remain much in your debt, at least for length. I won't allow that I am in your debt for warmth of friendship. I have nothing worth telling you: we are hitherto conquered only in threat: for my part, I have so little expectation of an invasion, that I have not buried a single enamel, nor bought a pane of painted glass the less: of the two panics in fashion, the French and the earthquake, I have not even made my option yet. The opposition get ground as little as either: Mr. Pitt talks by Shrewsbury clock, and is grown almost as little heard as that is at Westminster. We have had full eight days on the Pennsylvanian regiment. The young Hamilton has spoken and shone again; but nothing is luminous compared with Charles Townshend:—he drops down dead in a fit, has a resurrection, thunders in the capitol, confounds the treasury-bench, laughs at his

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own party, is laid up the next day, and overwhelms the duchess and the good women that go to nurse him! His brother's militia-bill does not come on till next week: in the mean time he adorns the shutters, walls, and napkins of every tavern in Pall-mall with caricatures of the duke and sir George Lyttelton, the duke of Newcastle and Mr. Fox. Your friend Legge has distinguished himself exceedingly on the supplies and taxes, and retains all the dignity of chancellor of the exchequer. I think I never heard so complete a scene of ignorance as yesterday on the new duties! Except Legge, you would not have thought there was a man in the house had learned troy-weight: Murray quibbled—at Hume Campbell the house groaned! Pitt and Fox were lamentable; poor sir George never knew prices from duties, nor drawbacks from premiums! The three taxes proposed were on plate, on bricks and tiles, on cards and dice. The earthquake has made us so good, that the ministry might have burned the latter in Smithfield if they had pleased. The bricks they were forced to give up, and consented graciously to accept 70,000*l.* on ale-houses, instead of 30,000*l.* on bricks. They had nearly been forced to extend the duty on plate beyond 10*l.* carrying the restriction by a majority of only two.

An embargo is laid on the shipping, to get sailors. The young court lords were going to raise troops of light-horse, but my lord Gower (I suppose by direction of the duke) proposed to the king, that they should rather employ their personal interest to recruit the army; which scheme takes place, and, as — said in the house, they are all turning recruiting serjeants. But notwithstanding we so much expect a storm from France, I am told that in France they think much more of their own internal storms than of us. Madame Pompadour wears devotion, whether forced or artful is not certain: the disputes between the king and the parliament run very high, and the duke of Orleans and the prince of Conti have set themselves at the head of the latter. Old N. came fuddled to the opera last week, and jostled an ancient lord Irwin, and then called him fool for being in his way: they were going to fight; but my lord Talbot, professing that he did not care if they were both hanged, advised them to go back and not expose themselves. You will stare perhaps at my calling N. *old*: it is not merely to distinguish him from his son; but he is such a champion and such a lover, that it is impossible not to laugh at him as if he was a Methuselah! He is en affaire

The duke of Cumberland, reglée

reglée with lady —: at a supper there a few nights ago of two-and-twenty people, they were talking of his going to ——— to direct some alterations: Mrs. N. in the softest infantine voice called out, “ My lady —, don’t let him do any thing out of doors ; but you will find him delightful within ! ”

I think I have nothing else to tell you but a bon-mot or two ; with that sort of news I think I take care to supply you duly. I send you constantly the best that London affords. Dick Edgcombe has said that his last child was born on *All-gamester’s-day* ; Twelfth-night.

This chapter shall conclude with an epigram ; the thought was George Selwyn’s, who you know serves all the epigram-makers in town with wit. It is on miss Chudleigh crying in the drawing-room on the death of her mother :

What filial piety ! what mournful grace,
For a lost parent, sits on Chudleigh’s face !
Fair virgin, weep no more, your anguish smother !
You in this town can never want a mother.

I have told poor Mr. Mann how kind you are to him : indeed I have been exceedingly frightened and troubled for him, and thought him in immediate danger. He is certainly much mended, though I still fear a consumption for him : he has not been able to move from Richmond this whole winter : I never fail to visit him twice or thrice a week. I heartily pity the fatigue and dulness of your life ; nor can I flatter you with pretending to believe it will end soon : I hope you will not be forced to gain as much reputation in the camp as you have in the cabinet !—You see I must finish.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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LETTER XXV.

Strawberry-hill, April 16, 1756.

YOU wrong me very much in thinking I omit writing because I don't hear from you as often as you have a mind I should: you are kinder to me in that respect than I have reason, considering your numerous occupations, to expect: the real and whole truth is, that I have had nothing to tell you; for I could not tire either you or myself with all the details relating to this foolish road-bill^{*}, which has engrossed the whole attention of every body lately. I have entered into it less than any body. What will you say when you are told that proxies have been sent for to Scotland? that my lord Harrington has been dragged into the house of lords from his coffin, and lord Arran carried thither to take the oaths, who I believe has not appeared there since the Revolution? In short, it has become quite a trial for power; and though the dukes of Grafton and Bedford have lent their names and their vehemence, you will guess what has been the engine behind the curtain.

The French are so obliging as to wait till we have done with these important squabbles: the house of commons takes care too not to draw off the attention of the nation. The militia-bill has passed through that solitude, but I hear will be stopped in the house of lords. I have lived lately in a round of great disagreeable suppers, which you know are always called, for my lady Yarmouth, as if the poor woman loved nothing but cramming: I suppose it will so much become the etiquette, that in the next reign there will be nothing but suppers for my lord B——. I am now come hither to keep my Newmarket, but the weather is cold and damp: it is uncertain whether the duke makes that campaign, or against the French. As the road-bill extinguished the violence about the two operas of next year, and they made the invasion forgot, and the invasion the earthquake, I foresee—and I go almost upon as sure grounds as prophets that take care to let the event precede the prediction—I foresee that the Hanoverians will swallow

^{*} The Paddington or New Road, which the buildings being likely to interrupt his prospect. The duke of Bedford opposed as making a dust behind Bedford-house, and from some intended side of the question.



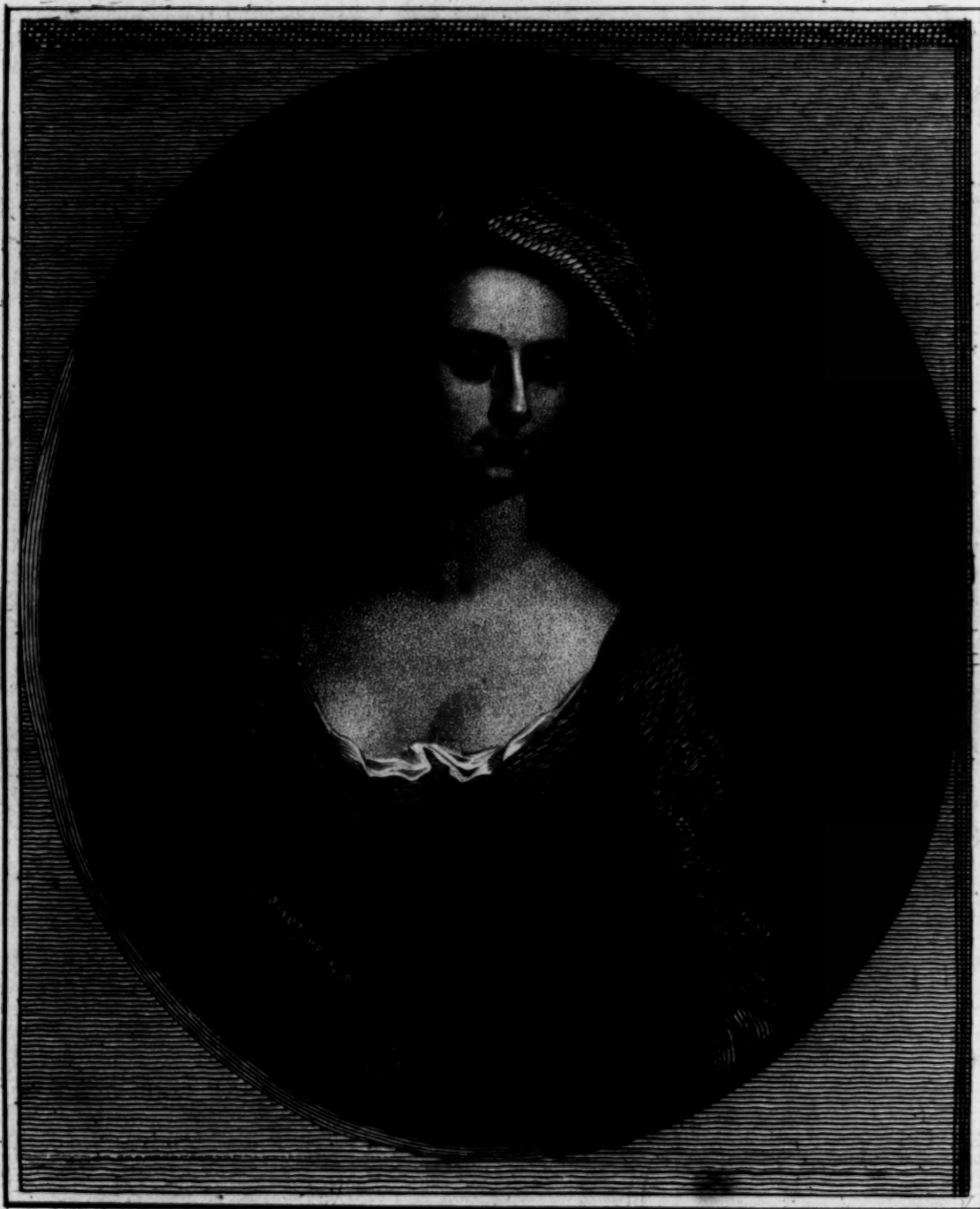


March Sculp.

Col. John Campbell afterwards Duke of Argyll.

Published as the Act directs May 1st 1798 by G.G. & J. Robinson Paternoster Row London.

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North Sculp.

*The hon.^{ble} Mary Bellenden,
afterwards
M^{rs} Campbell.*

Published as the Act directs May 1st 1798, by G.G. & J. Robinson London.

TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY. 51

up all: they have already a general named, who ranks before any one of ours; and there are to be two Hanoverian aide-de-camps!

You will hear by this post of the death of sir William Lowther, whose vast succession falls to sir James, and makes him Cræsus: he may hire the dukes of Bedford and Marlborough for led captains. I am sorry for this young man, though I did not know him; but it is hard to be cut off so young and so rich: old rich men seldom deserve to live, but he did a thousand generous acts. You will be diverted with a speech of lord S. one of those second-rate fortunes, who have not above five-and-thirty thousand pounds a year. He says, every body may attain some one point if they give all their attention to it; for his part, he knows he has no great capacity, he could not make a figure by his parts; he shall content himself with being one of the richest men in England! I literally saw him t'other day buying pictures for two-and-twenty shillings, that I would not hang in my garter; while I, who certainly have not made riches my sole point of view, was throwing away guineas, and piquing myself for old tombstones against your father-in-law the general. I hope lady A. will forgive my zeal for Strawberry against Coombank! Are you ever to see your Strawberry-hill again? Lord Duncannon flatters us that we shall see you in May. If I did not hope it, I would send you the only two new fashionable pieces; a comic elegy by C. and a wonderful book by a more wonderful author, Greville*. It is called *Maxims and Characters*: several of the former are pretty: all the latter so absurd, that one in particular, which at the beginning you take for the character of a man, turns out to be the character of a post-chaise.

You never tell me now any of Missy's bons-mots. I hope she has not resided in Ireland till they are degenerated into bulls! Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* General John Campbell, who upon the death of Archibald duke of Argyll succeeded to that title.

* Fulke Greville, esq.

LETTER XXVI.

Strawberry-hill, August 14, 1757.

YOU are too kind to me, and, if it were possible, would make me feel still more for your approaching departure¹. I can only thank you ten thousand times; for I must not expatiate, both from the nature of the subject, and from the uncertainty of this letter reaching you. I was told yesterday, that you had hanged a French spy in the Isle of Wight; I don't mean you, but your government. Though I wish no life taken away, it was some satisfaction to think that the French were at this hour wanting information.

Mr. F. breakfasted here t'other day. He confirmed what you tell me of lord F—C—'s account: it is universally said that the duke² failed merely by inferiority, the French soldiers behaving in general most scandalously. They had fourscore pieces of cannon, but very ill served. Marshal D'Estrées was recalled before the battle, but did not know it. He is said to have made some great mistakes in the action. I cannot speak to the truth of it, but the French are reported to have demanded two millions sterling of Hanover.

My whole letter will consist of hearfays; for, even at so little distance from town, one gets no better news than hawkers and pedlars retail about the country. From such I hear that George Haldane is made governor of Jamaica, and that a Mr. Campbell, whose father lives in Sweden, is going thither to make an alliance with that country, and hire 12,000 men. If one of my acquaintance, as an antiquary, were alive, sir Anthony Shirley³, I sup-

¹ On the expedition to Rochfort.

² The duke of Cumberland, in the affair at Hastenbeck.

³ Sir Thomas, sir Anthony, and sir Robert Shirley were three brothers, all great travellers, and all distinguished by extraordinary adventures in the reigns of queen Elizabeth and James I.—Much confusion has ensued in their history from their adventures being confounded together. Lord Orford, it should seem, had intended to

clear up these mistakes, as among his papers are many notes on their subject, and references to all the books which mention any part of their history. Sir Anthony Shirley, after sixteen years travels, went into Persia, was in high favour with the Sophi, married a relation of his, and was sent by him ambassador to James I. in 1611. See Baker's History of James I. p. 132, who by mistake calls him sir Robert instead of sir Anthony.

pose we should send him to Persia again for troops; I fear we shall get none nearer!

Adieu, my dearest Harry! Next to wishing your expedition still-born, my most constant thought is, how to be of any service to poor lady A—, whose reasonable concern makes even that of the strongest friendship seem trifling.

Yours most entirely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXVII.

Strawberry-hill, October 13, 1757.

IF you have received mine of Tuesday, which I directed to Portsmouth, you will perceive how much I agree with you. I am charmed with your sensible modesty. When I talked to you of defence, it was from concluding that you had all agreed that the attempt^{*} was impracticable, nay impossible; and from thence I judged that the ministry intended to cast the blame of a wild project upon the officers. That they may be a little willing to do that, I still think—but I have the joy to find that it cannot be thrown on you. As your friend, and fearing, if I talked for you first, it would look like doubt of your behaviour, at least that you had bid me defend you at the expence of your friends, I said not a word, trusting that your innocence would break out and make its way. I have the satisfaction to find it has already done so. It comes from all quarters but your own, which makes it more honourable. My lady Suffolk told me last night, that she heard all the *seamen* said they wished the general had been as ready as Mr. Conway. But this is not all: I left a positive commission in town to have the truth of the general report sent me without the least disguise; in consequence of which I am solemnly assured that your name is never mentioned but with honour;

* On Rochfort.

that

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that all the violence, and that extreme, is against sir John Mordaunt and Mr. Cornwallis. I am particularly sorry for the latter, as I firmly believe him as brave as possible.

This situation of things makes me advise, what I know and find I need not advise, your saying as little as possible in your own defence, nay, as much as you can with any decency for the others. I am neither acquainted with, nor care a straw about, sir John Mordaunt; but as it is known that you differed with him, it will do you the greatest honour to vindicate him, instead of disculpating yourself. My most earnest desire always is, to have your character continue as amiable and respectable as possible. There is no doubt but the whole will come out, and therefore your justification not coming from yourself will set it in a ten times better light. I shall go to town to-day to meet your brother; and as I know his affection for you will make him warm in clearing you, I shall endeavour to restrain that ardour, of which you know I have enough on the least glimmering of a necessity: but I am sure you will agree with me, that, on the representation I have here made to you, it is not proper for your friends to appear solicitous about you.

The city talk very treason, and, connecting the suspension at Stade with this disappointment, cry out, that the general had positive orders to do nothing, in order to obtain gentler treatment of Hanover. They intend in a violent manner to demand redress, and are too enraged to let any part of this affair remain a mystery.

I think, by your directions, this will reach you before you leave Bevis-mound: I would gladly meet you at Park-place, if I was not sure of seeing you in town a day or two afterwards at farthest; which I will certainly do, if you let me know. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XXVIII.

Arlington-street, June 4, 1758.

THE habeas corpus is finished, but only for this year. Lord Temple threatened to renew it the next; on which lord Hardwicke took the party of proposing to order the judges to prepare a bill for extending the power of granting the writ in vacation to all the judges. This prevented a division; though lord Temple, who protested alone t'other day, had a flaming protest ready, which was to have been signed by near thirty. They sat last night till past nine. Lord Mansfield spoke admirably for two hours and twenty-five minutes. Except lord Ravensworth and the duke of Newcastle, whose meaning the first never knows himself, and the latter's nobody else, all who spoke, spoke well: they were lord Temple, lord Talbot, lord Bruce, and lord Stanhope, for; lord Morton, lord Hardwicke, and lord Mansfield, against the bill.

The duke of Grafton has resigned. Norborne Berkeley has converted a party of pleasure into a campaign, and is gone with the expedition¹, without a shirt but what he had on, and what is lent him. The night he sailed he had invited women to supper. Besides him, and those you know, is a Mr. Sylvester Smith. Every body was asking, "But who is Sylvester Smith?" Harry Townshend replied, "Why, he is the son of Delaval, who was the son of Lowther, who was the son of Armitage, who was the son of Downe."

The fleet sailed on Thursday morning. I don't know why, but the persuasion is that they will land on this side Ushant, and that we shall hear some events by Tuesday or Wednesday. Some believe that lord Anson and Howe have different destinations. Rochfort, where there are 20,000 men, is said positively not to be the place. The king says there are 80,000 men and three marshals in Normandy and Bretagne. George Selwyn asked general Campbell, if the ministry had yet told the king the object?

Mademoiselle de l'Enclos² is arrived, to my supreme felicity—I cannot

¹ Against St. Maloes.
² All these gentlemen had been volunteers on successive expeditions to the coast of France.
³ The portrait of Ninon de l'Enclos, now at Strawberry-hill, given to Mr. Walpole by the old countess of Sandwich, daughter to the famous lord Rochester. She died at Paris in the year 1755.

say

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say very handsome or agreeable; but I had been prepared on the article of her charms. I don't say, like Harry VIII. of Anne of Cleves, that she is a Flanders mare, though to be sure she is rather large: on the contrary, I bear it as well as ever prince did who was married by proxy—and she does not find me *fricassé dans de la neige*¹. Adieu.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I forgot to tell you of another *galanterie* I have had, a portrait of queen Elizabeth left here while I was out of town. The servant said it was a present, but he had orders not to say from whom.

LETTER XXX.

June 16, 1758, 2 o'clock noon.

WELL, my dear Harry! you are not the only man in England who have not conquered France²! Even dukes of Marlborough³ have been there without doing the business. I don't doubt but your good heart has even been hoping, in spite of your understanding, that our heroes have not only taken St. Maloes, but taken a trip cross the country to burn Rochfort, only to show how easy it was. We have waited with astonishment at not hearing that the French court was removed in a panic to Lyons, and that the mesdames had gone off in their shifts with only a provision of rouge for a week. Nay, for my part, I expected to be deafened with encomiums on my lord A——'s continence, who, after being allotted madame Pompadour as his share of the spoils, had again imitated Scipio, and, in spite of

¹ Madame de Sevigné, in her Letters to her daughter, reports that Ninon thus expressed herself relative to her son the marquis de Sevigné, who was one of her lovers.

² Alluding to the expedition against Roche-

fort, the year before, on which Mr. Conway was second in command.

³ The duke of Marlborough commanded the troops on this expedition against St. Maloes.

the

the violence of his *temperament*, had restored her unfulfilled to the king of France.—Alack! we have restored nothing but a quarter of a mile of coast to the right owners. A messenger arrived in the middle of the night with an account that we have burned two frigates and an hundred and twenty small fry; that it was found impossible to bring up the cannon against the town; and that, the French army approaching the coast, commodore H——, with the expedition of harlequin as well as the taciturnity, reembarked our whole force in seven hours, volunteers and all, with the loss only of one man, and they are all gone to seek their fortune somewhere else. Well! in half a dozen more wars we shall know something of the coast of France. Last war we discovered a fine bay near port l'Orient: we have now found out that we knew nothing of St. Maloes. As they are popular persons, I hope the city of London will send some more gold boxes to these discoverers. If they send a patch box to lord G—— S——, it will hold all his laurels. As our young nobility cannot at present travel through France, I suppose this is a method for finishing their studies. George Selwyn says he supposes the French ladies will have scaffolds erected on the shore to see the English go by.—But I won't detain the messenger any longer; I am impatient to make the duchess' happy, who I hope will soon see the duke returned from his coasting voyage.

The C——s will be with you next Wednesday, and I believe I too; but I can take my own word so little, that I will not give it you. I know I must be back at Strawberry on Friday night; for lady Hervey and lady Stafford are to be there with me for a few days from tomorrow se'nnight. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* Lady Mary Bruce duchess of Richmond, her mother during the duke of Richmond's only child of the countess of Ailesbury by her absence, who was a volunteer upon this expedition. She was at Park-place with

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LETTER XXX.

Strawberry-hill, July 21, 1758.

YOUR gazette, I know, has been a little idle; but we volunteer gazettes, like other volunteers, are not easily tied down to regularity and rules. We think we have so much merit, that we think we have a right to some demerit too; and those who depend upon us, I mean us gazettes, are often disappointed. A common foot newspaper may want our vivacity, but is ten times more useful. Besides, I am not in town, and ten miles out of it is an hundred miles out of it for all the purposes of news. You know of course that lord George Sackville refused to go *a-buccaneering* again, as he called it; that *my friend* lord A. who loves a dram of any thing, from glory to brandy, is *out of order*; that just as lord Panmure was going to take the command, he missed an eye; and that at last they have routed out an old general Blighe from the horse armoury in Ireland, who is to undertake the codicil to the expedition. Moreover, you know that prince Edward is bound 'prentice to Mr. Howe. All this you have heard; yet, like my cousin the Chronicle, I repeat what has been printed in every newspaper of the week, and then finish with one paragraph of *spick and span*. Alack! my postscript is not very fortunate: a convoy of 12,000 men, &c. was going to the king of Prussia, was attacked unexpectedly by 5000 Austrians, and cut entirely to pieces; provisions, ammunition, &c. all taken. The king instantly raised the siege, and retreated with so much precipitation, that he was forced to nail up 60 pieces of cannon. I conclude the next we hear of him will be a great victory: if he sets overnight in a defeat, he always rises next morning in a triumph—at least, we that have nothing to do but expect and admire, shall be extremely disappointed if he does not. Besides, he is three months debtor to fame.

The only private history of any freshness is, my lady D——'s christening; the child had *three* godfathers: and I will tell you why: they had thought of the duke of Newcastle, my lord and George ——; but of two ——'s and his grace, God could not take the word of any two of them, so all three were forced to be bound.

I draw this comfort from the king of Prussia's defeat, that it may prevent the folly of another expedition: I don't know how or why, but no reason is a very good one against a thing that has no reason in it. Eleven hundred men are ill from the last enterprize. Perhaps don William Quixote¹ and admiral Amadis² may determine to send them to the Danube; for, as no information ever precedes their resolutions, and no impossibilities ever deter them, I don't see why the only thing worthy their consideration should not be, how glorious and advantageous an exploit it would be, if it could be performed. Why did bishop Wilkins try to fly? Not that he thought it practicable, but because it would be very convenient. As he did not happen to be a particular favourite of the city of London, he was laughed at: they prepossessed in his favour, and he would have received twenty gold boxes, though twenty people had broken their necks off St. Paul's with trying the experiment.

I have heard a whisper, that you do not go into Yorkshire this summer. Is it true? It is fixed that I go to Ragley³ on the 13th of next month; I trust you do so too. Have you had such deluges for three weeks well counted, as we have? If I had not cut one of my perroquet's wings, and there were an olive tree in the country, I would send to know where there is a foot of dry land.

You have heard, I suppose, if not, be it known to you, that Mr. Keppel, the canon of Windsor, espouses my niece Laura; yes, Laura⁴. I rejoice much so I receive your compliments upon it, lest you should, as it sometimes happens, forget to make them. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ William Pitt, afterwards earl of Chatham, then secretary of state.

² Lord Anson, then first lord of the admiralty.

³ The seat of the earl of Nerford.

⁴ Eldest daughter of sir Edward Walpole.

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July 22.

FOR the pleasure of my conscience I had written all the above last night, expecting lord Lyttelton, the dean, and other company, to-day. This morning I receive yours; and having already told you all I know, I have only a few paragraphs to answer.

I am pleased that you are pleased about my book¹: *you* shall see it very soon; though there will scarce be a new page: nobody else shall see it till spring. In the first place, the prints will not be finished: in the next, I intend that two or three other things shall appear before it from my press, of other authors; for I will not surfeit people with my writings, nor have them think that I propose to find employment alone for a whole press—so far from it, I intend to employ it no more about myself.

I will certainly try to see you during your waiting². Adieu!

L E T T E R XXXI.

Strawberry-hill, September 2, 1758.

IT is well I have got something to pay you for the best letter that ever was! A vast victory, I own, does not entertain me so much as a good letter; but you are bound to like any thing military better than your own wit, and therefore I hope you will think a defeat of the Russians a better bon-mot than any you sent me. Should you think it clever if the king of Prussia has beaten them? How much cleverer, if he has taken three lieutenant generals and an hundred pieces of cannon? How much cleverer still, if he has left fifteen thousand Muscovites dead on the spot³? Does the loss of *only* three thousand of his own men, take off from or sharpen the sting of this joke? In short, all this is fact, as a courier arrived at Sion-hill

¹ The Anecdotes of Painting.

² As groom of the bed-chamber to the king.

³ The defeat of the Russians at Zornsdorff.

this morning affirms. The city, I suppose, expect that his majesty will now be at leisure to step to Ticonderoga, and repair our mishap¹. But I shall talk no more politics: if this finds you at Chatsworth, as I suppose it will, you will be better informed than from me.

Lady — — arrived at Ragley between two and three in the morning—how unlucky that I was not there to offer her part of an aired bed! But how could you think of the proposal you have made me? Am not I already in love with *the youngest, handsomest and wittiest widow in England?* As *Herculean a labourer* as I am, as Tom Hervey says, I don't choose another. I am still in the height of my impatience for the chest of old papers from Ragley², which, either by the fault of their servants or of the waggoner, is not yet arrived. I shall go to London again on Monday in quest of it; and in truth think so much of it, that, when I first heard of the victory this morning, I rejoiced, as we were likely now *to recover the Palatinate*. Good night.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXII.

Arlington-street, January 19, 1759.

I HOPE the treaty of Shuys advances rapidly³. Considering that your own court is as new to you as monsieur de Bareil and his, you cannot be very well entertained: the joys of a Dutch fishing town and the incidents of a cartel will not compose a very agreeable history. In the mean time you do not lose much: though the parliament is met, no politics are come to town: one may describe the house of commons like the price of stocks:

¹ The repulse of general Abercrombie at Ticonderoga.

² Mr. Conway was sent to Shuys to settle a cartel for prisoners with the French. Monsieur de Bareil was the person appointed by the French court for the same business.

³ The Conway papers in the reign of James I.

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Debates, nothing done. Votes, under par. Patriots, no price. Oratory, books shut. Love and war are as much at a stand: neither the duchess of Hamilton* nor the expeditions are gone off yet. Prince Edward† has asked to go to Quebec, and has been refused. If I was sure they would refuse me, I would ask to go thither too. I should not dislike about as much laurel as I could stick in my window at Christmas.

We are next week to have a serenata at the Opera-house for the king of Prussia's birth-day: it is to begin, *Viva Georgio, e Federigo viva!* It will, I own, divert me to see my lord Temple whispering for this alliance, on the same bench on which I have so often seen him whisper against all Germany. The new opera pleases universally, and I hope will yet hold up its head. Since Vanneschi‡ is cunning enough to make us sing *the roast-beef of old Germany*, I am persuaded it will revive: politics are the only hot-bed for keeping such a tender plant as Italian music alive in England.

You are so thoughtless about your dress, that I cannot help giving you a little warning against your return. Remember, every body that comes from abroad is *censé* to come from France, and whatever they wear at their first re-appearance immediately grows the fashion. Now if, as is very likely, you should through inadvertence change hats with a master of a Dutch smack, O—— will be upon the watch, will conclude you took your pattern from monsieur de Bareil, and in a week's time we shall all be equipped like Dutch skippers. You see I speak very disinterestedly; for, as I never wear a hat myself, it is indifferent to me what sort of hat I don't wear. Adieu! I hope nothing in this letter, if it is opened, will affect the conferences, nor hasten our rupture with Holland. Lest it should, I send it to lord Holderness's office; concluding, like lady B—— W——, that the government never suspect what they send under their own covers.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* Elizabeth Gunning, duchess dowager of Hamilton. † Afterwards created duke of York. ‡ Abbate Vanneschi, an Italian, and director of the opera.

LETTER XXXIII.

Arlington-street, January 28, 1759.

YOU and monsieur de Bareil may give yourselves what airs you please of settling cartels with expedition: you don't exchange prisoners with half so much alacrity as Jack Campbell* and the duchess of Hamilton have exchanged hearts. I had so little observed the negotiation, or suspected any, that, when your brother told me of it yesterday morning, I would not believe a tittle—I beg Mr. Pitt's pardon, not an *iota*. It is the prettiest match in the world—since yours—and every body likes it but the duke of B—— and lord C——. What an extraordinary fate is attached to those two women! Who could have believed that a Gunning would unite the two great houses of Campbell and Hamilton? For my part, I expect to see my lady Coventry queen of Prussia. I would not venture to marry either of them these thirty years, for fear of being shuffled out of the world *prematurely* to make room for the rest of their adventures. The first time Jack carries the duchess into the Highlands, I am persuaded that some of his second-sighted subjects will see him in a winding-sheet, with a train of kings behind him as long as those in Macbeth.

We had a scrap of a debate on Friday on the Prussian and Hessian treaties. Old Vyner opposed the first, in pity to that *poor woman*, as he called her, the empress queen. Lord Strange objected to the gratuity of 60,000*l.* to the landgrave, unless words were inserted to express his receiving that sum in full of all demands. If Hume Campbell had cavilled at this favourite treaty, Mr. Pitt could scarce have treated him with more haughtiness; and, what is far more extraordinary, Hume Campbell could scarce have taken it more dutifully. This *long* day was over by half an hour after four.

As you and monsieur de Bareil are on such amicable terms, you will take care to soften to him a new conquest we have made. Keppel has taken the island of Goree. You great ministers know enough of its importance;

* The present duke of Argyll.

I need.

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I need not detail it. Before your letters came we had heard of the death of the princess royal: you will find us black and all black. Lady Northumberland and the great ladies put off their assemblies: diversions begin again to-morrow with the mourning.

You perceive, London cannot furnish half so long a letter as the little town of Sluys; at least I have not the art of making one out. In truth, I believe I should not have writ this unless lady A—— had bid me; but she does not care how much trouble it gives me, provided it amuses you for a moment. Good night!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I forgot to tell you that the king has granted my lord Marischall's pardon, at the request of monsieur de Knyphausen. I believe the pretender himself could get his attainder reversed if he would apply to the king of Prussia.

LETTER XXXIV.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 18, 1759.

I INTENDED my visit to Park-place to show my lady A—— that when I come thither it is not solely on your account, and yet I will not quarrel with my journey thither if I should find you there; but seriously I cannot help begging you to think whether you will go thither or not, just now. My first thought about you has ever been what was proper for you to do; and though you are the man in the world that think of that the most yourself, yet you know I have twenty scruples, which even you sometimes laugh at. I will tell them to you, and then you will judge, as you can best. Sir Edward Hawke and his fleet is dispersed, at least driven back to Plymouth: the French, if one may believe that they have broken a regiment for mutinying against embarking, were actually embarked at that instant. The most sensible people I know, always thought they would
postpone

postpone their invasion, if ever they intended it, till our great ships could not keep the sea, or were eaten up by the scurvy. Their ports are now free; their situation is desperate: the new account of our taking Quebec leaves them in the most deplorable condition; they will be less able than ever to raise money, we have got ours for next year; and this event would facilitate it, if we had not: they must try for a peace, they have nothing to go to market with but Minorca. In short, if they cannot strike some desperate blow in this island or Ireland, they are undone: the loss of 20,000 men to do us some mischief, would be cheap. I should even think madame Pompadour in danger of being torn to pieces, if they did not make some attempt. Madame Maintenon, not half so unpopular, mentions in one of her letters her unwillingness to trust her niece m^{lle} Aumale on the road, for fear of some such accident. You will smile perhaps at all this reasoning and pedantry; but it tends to this—If desperation should send the French somewhere, and the wind should force them to your coast, which I do not suppose their object, and you should be out of the way, you know what your enemies would say; and, strange as it is, even you have been proved to have enemies. My dear sir, think of this! Wolfe, as I am convinced, has fallen a sacrifice to his rash blame of you. If I understand any thing in the world, his letter that came on Sunday said this: “*Quebec is impregnable; it is flinging away the lives of brave men to attempt it. I am in the situation of Conway at Rochfort; but having blamed him, I must do what I now see he was in the right to see was wrong, and yet what he would have done; and as I am commander, which he was not, I have the melancholy power of doing what he was prevented doing.*” Poor man! his life has paid the price of his injustice; and as his death has purchased such benefit to his country, I lament him, as I am sure you, who have twenty times more courage and good nature than I have, do too. In short, I, who never did any thing right or prudent myself (not, I am afraid, for want of knowing what was so), am content with your being perfect, and with suggesting any thing to you that may tend to keeping you so:—and (what is not much to the present purpose) if such a pen as mine can effect it, the world hereafter shall know that you was so. In short, I have pulled down my lord Falkland, and I desire you will take care that I may speak truth when I erect you in his place: for remember, I love truth even better than I love you. I always confess my own faults, and I will not palliate yours. —But, laughing apart, if you think there is no weight in what I say, I shall gladly meet you at Park-place, whither

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whither I shall go on Monday, and stay as long as I can, unless I hear from you to the contrary. If you should think I have hinted any thing to you of consequence, would not it be handsome, if, after receiving leave, you should write to my lord Ligonier, that though you had been at home but one week in the whole summer, yet as there might be occasion for your presence in the camp¹, you should decline the permission he had given you?—See what it is to have a wife relation, who preaches a thousand fine things to you which he would be the last man in the world to practise himself. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXV.

Strawberry-hill, June 28, 1769.

THE devil is in people for fidgiting about! They can neither be quiet in their own houses, nor let others be at peace in theirs! Have not they enough of one another in winter, but they must cuddle in summer too? For your part, you are a very priest: the moment one repents, you are for turning it to account. I wish you was in camp—never will I pity you again. How did you complain when you was in Scotland, Ireland, Flanders, and I don't know where, that you could never enjoy Park-place? Now you have a whole summer to yourself, and you are as *junkettacious* as my lady Northumberland. Pray, what horse-race do you go to next? For my part, I can't afford to lead such a life: I have Conway-papers to sort; I have lives of the painters to write; I have my prints to paste, my house to build, and every thing in the world to tell posterity.—How am I to find time for all this? I am past forty, and may not have above as many more years to live; and here I am to go here and to go there.—Well, I will meet you at Chaffont on Thursday; but I positively will stay but one night. I have settled with your brother that we will be at Oxford on the 13th of July, as lord Beauchamp is only loose from the 12th to the 20th. I will be at

¹ Mr. Conway was encamped in Kent near Canterbury.

Park-place on the 12th, and we will go together the next day. If this is too early for you, we may put it off to the 15th: determine by Thursday, and one of us will write to lord Hertford.

Well! Quebec is come to life again. Last night I went to see the Holdernesses, who by the way are in raptures with Park—in Sion-lane: as Cibber says of the Revolution, I met the Raising of the Siege; that is, I met my lady in a triumphal car, drawn by a Manks horse thirteen little fingers high, with lady Emily,—

— et fibi Countess

Ne placeat, ma'amfelle curru portatur eodem—

Mr. M—— was walking in ovation by himself after the car; and they were going to see the bonfire at the alehouse at the corner. The whole procession returned with me; and from the countess's dressing-room we saw a battery fired before the house, the mob crying, "God bless the good news!" —These are all the particulars I know of the siege: my lord would have shewed me the journal, but we amused ourselves much better in going to eat peaches from the new Dutch stoves.

The rain is come indeed, and my grass is as green as grass; but all my hay has been cut and soaking this week, and I am too much in the fashion not to have given up gardening for farming; as next I suppose we shall farming, and turn graziers and hogdrivers.

I never heard of such a female as my lady Stormont brought to bed in flames. I hope miss Bacchus Murray will not carry the resemblance through, and love drinking like a Pole. My lady Lyttelton is at Mr. Garrick's, and they were to have breakfasted here this morning; but somehow or other they have changed their mind. Good night!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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LETTER XXXVI

Strawberry-hill, August 7, 1769.

I CAN give you but an unpleasant account of myself, I mean, unpleasant for me; every body else I suppose it will make laugh. Come, laugh at once! I am laid up with the gout, am an absolute cripple, am carried up to bed by two men, and could walk to China as soon as cross the room. In short, here is my history: I have been out of order this fortnight, without knowing what was the matter with me; pains in my head, sicknesses at my stomach, dispiritedness, and a return of the nightly fever I had in the winter. I concluded a northern journey would take all this off—but behold! on Monday morning I was seized as I thought with the cramp in my left foot; however, I walked about all day: towards evening it discovered itself by its true name, and that night I suffered a great deal. However, on Tuesday I was again able to go about the house; but since Tuesday I have not been able to stir, and am wrapped in flannels and swathed like Sir Paul Pliant on his wedding-night. I expect to hear that there is a bet at Arthur's, which runs fastest, Jack Harris' or L. Nobody would believe me six years ago when I said I had the gout. They would do leanness and temperance honours to which they have not the least claim.

I don't yet give up my expedition; as my foot is much swelled, I trust this alderman distemper is going: I shall set out the instant I am able; but I much question whether it will be soon enough for me to get to Ragley by the time the clock strikes Loo. I find I grow too old to make the circuit with the charming duchess*.

I did not tell you about German skirmishes, for I knew nothing of them: when two vast armies only scratch one another's faces, it gives me no attention. My gazette never contains above one or two casualties of foreign politics:—overlaid, one king; dead of convulsions, an electorate; burnt to death, Dresden.

* John Harris of Hayne in Devonshire, married to Mrs. Conway's eldest sister.

* Anne Liddell duchess of Grafton.

I wish

I wish you joy of all your purchases; why, you sound as rich as if you had had the gout these ten years. I beg their pardon; but just at present, I am very glad not to be near the vivacity of either Miffy or Peter¹. I agree with you much about the Minor: there are certainly parts and wit in it. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXVII.

Strawberry-hill, September 19, 1760.

THANK you for your notice, though I should certainly have contrived to see you without it. Your brother promised he would come and dine here one day with you and lord Beauchamp. I go to Navestock on Monday, for two or three days; but that will not exhaust your waiting². I shall be in town on Sunday; but as that is a court-day, I will not, so don't propose it—dine with you at Kensington; but I will be with my lady Hertford about six, where your brother and you will find me if you please. I cannot come to Kensington in the evening, for I have but one pair of horses in the world, and they will have to carry me to town in the morning.

I wonder the king expects a battle; when prince Ferdinand can do as well without fighting, why should he fight? Can't he make the hereditary prince gallop into a mob of Frenchmen, and get a scratch on the nose; and Johnson straddle cross a river and come back with six heads of hussars in his fob, and then can't he thank all the world, and assure them he shall never forget the victory they have not gained? These thanks are sent over: the gazette swears that this no success was chiefly owing to general Mof-tyn; and the chronicle protests, that it was achieved by my lord Granby's losing his hat, which he never wears; and then his lordship sends over for three hundred thousand pints of porter to drink his own health; and

¹ A favourite greyhound.

² Mr. Conway was a groom of the bed-chamber to the king, and then in waiting at Kensington. then

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then Mr. Pitt determines to carry on the war for another year; and then the duke of Newcastle hopes that we shall be beat, that he may lay the blame on Mr. Pitt, and that then he shall be minister for 30 years longer; and then we shall be the greatest nation in the universe. Amen!—My dear Harry, you see how easy it is to be a hero. If you had but taken Impudence and Oatlands in your way to Rochfort, it would not have signified whether you had taken Rochfort or not. Adieu! I don't know who lady A.'s Mr. Alexander is.—If she curls like a vine with any Mr. Alexander but you, I hope my lady Coventry will recover and be your Roxana.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXVIII.

YOU are good for nothing; you have no engagement, you have no principles; and all this I am not afraid to tell you, as you have left your sword behind you. If you take it ill, I have given my nephew, who brings your sword, a letter of attorney to fight you for me; I shall certainly not see you: my lady Waldegrave goes to town on Friday, but I remain here*. You lose lady Anne Conolly* and her forty daughters, who all dine here to-day upon a few loaves and three small fishes. I should have been glad if you would have breakfasted here on Friday on your way; but as I lie in bed rather longer than the lark, I fear our hours would not suit one another. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* At Strawberry-hill.

* Sister of William earl of Strafford.

LETTER XXXIX.

Monday, five o'clock, Feb. 1761.

I AM a little peevish with you—I told you on Thursday night that I had a mind to go to Strawberry on Friday without staying for the qualification-bill. You said it did not signify—No! What if *you* intended to speak on it? Am I indifferent to hearing you? More—Am I indifferent about acting with you? Would not I follow you in any thing in the world?—This is saying no profligate thing. Is there any thing I might not follow you in? You even did not tell me yesterday that you had spoken. Yet I will tell you all I have heard; though if there was a point in the world in which I could not wish you to succeed where you wish yourself, perhaps it would be in having you employed. I cannot be cool about your danger; yet I cannot know any thing that concerns you, and keep it from you. Charles Townshend called here just after I came to town to-day. Among other discourse he told me of your speaking on Friday, and that your speech was reckoned hostile to the duke of Newcastle. Then talking of regiments going abroad, he said, * * * *

With regard to your reserve to me, I can easily believe that your natural modesty made you unwilling to talk of yourself to me. I don't suspect you of any reserve to me: I only mention it now for an occasion of telling you that I don't like to have any body think that I would not do whatever you do. I am of no consequence: but at least it would give me some, to act invariably with you; and that I shall most certainly be ever ready to do. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XL

Arlington-Street, April 10, 1761.

IF Prince Ferdinand had studied how to please me, I don't know any method he could have lighted upon so likely to gain my heart, as being beaten out of the field before you joined him. I delight in a hero that is driven so far that nobody can follow him. He is as well at Paderborn, as where I have long wished the king of Prussia; the other world. You may frown if you please at my imprudence, you who are gone with all the disposition in the world to be well with your commander; the peace is in a manner made, and the anger of generals will not be worth sixpence these ten years. We peaceable folks are now to govern the world, and you warriors must in your turn tremble at our subjects the mob, as we have done before your hussars and court-martials.

I am glad you had so pleasant a passage*. My lord Lyttelton would say, that lady M—— C——, like Venus, smiled over the waves, et mare præstabat eunti. In truth, when she could tame me, she must have had little trouble with the ocean. Tell me how many burgomasters she has subdued, or how many would have fallen in love with her if they had not fallen asleep? Come, has she saved two-pence by her charms? Have they abated a farthing of their impositions for her being handsomer than any thing in the seven provinces? Does she know how political her journey is thought? Nay, my lady A——, you are not out of the scrape; you are both reckoned des marechaux de Guebriant†, going to fetch, and consequently govern the young queen. There are more jealousies about your voyage, than the duke of Newcastle would feel if Dr. Shaw had prescribed a little ipecacuanha to my lord Bute.

I am sorry I must adjourn my mirth, to give lady A—— a pang; poor

* From Harwich to Helvoetsluys.

† The marechale de Guebriant was sent to the king of Poland with the character of em-

bassadess by Louis XIII. to accompany the princess Marië de Gonzague, who had been married by proxy to the king of Poland at Paris.

Mr Harry Ballenden^{*} is dead; he made a great dinner at Almac's for the house of Drummond, drank very hard, caught a violent fever, and died in a very few days. Perhaps you will have heard this before; I shall wish so; I do not like, even innocently, to be the cause of sorrow.

I do not at all lament lord Granby's leaving the army, and your immediate succession. There are persons in the world who would gladly ease you of this burthen. As you are only to take the viceroyalty of a coop, and that for a few weeks, I shall but smile if you are terribly distressed. Don't let lady A—— proceed to Brunswic: you might have had a wife who would not have thought it so terrible to fall into the hands [arms] of hussars; but as I don't take *that* to be your countess's turn, leave her with the Dutch, who are not so boisterous as coffacs or chancellors of the exchequer.

My love, my duty, my jealousy, to lady M——, if she is not failed before you receive this—if she is, I shall deliver them myself. Good night; I write immediately on the receipt of your letter, but you see I have nothing yet new to tell you.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XL.

Arlington-street, July 14, 1761.

MY dearest Harry, how could you write me such a cold letter as I have just received from you, and beginning *Dear sir*? Can you be angry with me, for can I be in fault to you? Blameable in ten thousand other respects, may not I almost say I am perfect with regard to you? Since I was fifteen have not I loved you unalterably? Since I was capable of knowing your merit, has not my admiration been veneration? For what could so much affection and esteem change? Has not your honour, your interest, your safety been ever my first objects? Oh, Harry! if you knew what I have felt and am feeling about you, would you charge me with neglect? If I have

^{*} Uncle to the countess of Ailesbury.

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seen a person since you went, to whom my first question has not been, "What do you hear of the peace?" you would have reason to blame me. You say I write very seldom: I will tell you what, I should almost be sorry to have you see the anxiety I have expressed about you in letters to every body else. No; I must except lady A——, and there is not another on earth who loves you so well and to whom I so constantly relates to you.

With regard to writing, this is exactly what I have nothing to tell you; nothing has happened; and where you are, I am not in the habit of writing. Having neither hopes nor fears, I always write of the moment, and even laugh to divert the person I am writing to, without any ill will on the subject I mention. But in your case, I thought I might be prejudicial to you; and to write grave and serious letters, I trusted you was too secure of me either to like them or desire them. I knew no news, nor could I: I have lived quite alone at Strawberry Hill, and connected with no court, ministers, or party; consequently happy events and events there have been none. I have not even for this month heard my lady T——'s extempore gazette. All the morning I play with my women or animals, go regularly every evening to the meadows with my horse, or sit with my lady Suffolk; and at night scribble my painter's sketch of a journal to send you. I write more trifling letters than any man living; I am ashamed of them, and yet they are expected of me. My lady A——, your brother, Mr. Horace Mann, George Montagu, and Lord——all expect I should write—Of what? I live less and less in the world, and for it less and less, and yet am thus obliged to inquire what it is to do. Do make these all excuses for me, and remember half your letter to my lady A——. I was to write of the king's marriage, concluding the volume I send it to you: time is so short, I will copy my own letters, if you expect it; for I will not say that I can disoblige you. I will send you a diary of the duke of York's balls and Ranelaghs, inform you of how many children my lady B—— is with child, and how many races my nephew goes to. No; I will not, you do not want *such* proofs of my friendship.

The papers tell us you are retiring, and I was glad. You seem to expect an action—Can this give me spirits? Can I write to you joyfully, and fear? Or is it fit prince Ferdinand should know you have a friend that is as great

* Henrietta Hobart, countess of Suffolk, then living at Marble-hill.



*The hon.^{ble} Mrs. Howard,
afterwards
Countess of Suffolk*

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a coward about you as your wife? The only reason for my silence, that can *not* be true, is, that I forget you. When I am prudent or cautious, it is no symptom of my being indifferent. Indifference does not happen in friendships, as it does in passions; and if I was young enough or feeble enough to cease to love you, I would not for my own sake let it be known. Your virtues are my greatest pride; I have done myself so much honour by them, that I will not let it be known you have been peevish with me unreasonably. Pray God we may have peace, that I may scold you for it!

The king's marriage was kept the profoundest secret till last Wednesday, when the privy council was extraordinarily summoned, and it was notified to them. Since that, the new queen's mother is dead, and will delay it a few days; but lord Harcourt is to sail on the 27th, and the coronation will certainly be on the 22d of September. All that I know fixed, is, lord Harcourt master of the horse, the duke of Manchester chamberlain, and Mr. Stone treasurer. Lists there are in abundance; I don't know the authentic: those most talked of, are, lady Bute groom of the stole, the duchesesses of Hamilton and Ancafter, lady Northumberland, Bolinbroke, Weymouth, Scarborough, Abergavenny, Effingham, for ladies; you may choose any six of them you please; the four first are most probable. Misses, Henry Beauclerc, M. Howe, Meadows, Wrottesley, Bishop, &c. &c. &c. Choose your maids too. Bedchamber women, Mrs. Bloodworth, Robert Brudenel, Charlotte Dives, lady Erskine: in short, I repeat a mere newspaper.

We expect the final answer of France this week. Buffy^{*} was in great pain on the fireworks for Québec, lest he should be obliged to illuminate his house: you see I ransack my memory for something to tell you.

Adieu! I have more reason to be angry than you had; but I am not so hasty: you are of a *violent, impetuous, jealous* temper—I, *cool, sedate, reasonable*. I believe I must subscribe my name, or you will not know me by this description.

Yours unalterably,

HOR. WALPOLE.

^{*} The abbé de Buffy sent here with overtures of peace. Mr. Stanley was at the same time sent to Paris.

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LETTER XLII.

Strawberry-hill, July 23, 1761.

WELL, *mon biau cousin*! you may be as cross as you please now: when you beat two marshals of France and cut their armies to pieces¹, I don't mind your pouting; but in good truth, it was a little vexatious to have you quarrelling with me, when I was in greater pain about you than I can express. I will say no more; make a peace, under the walls of Paris if you please, and I will forgive you all—but no more battles: consider, as Dr. Hay said, it is cowardly to beat the French now.

Don't look upon yourselves as the only conquerors in the world. Pondicherry is ours, as well as the field of Kirk Denckirk. The park guns never have time to cool; we ruin ourselves in gun-powder and sky-rockets. If you have a mind to do the gallantest thing in the world after the greatest, you must escort the princess of Mecklenburg² through France. You see what a bully I am; the moment the French run away, I am sending you on expeditions. I forgot to tell you that the king has got the *île* of Dominique and the chicken-pox, two trifles that don't count in the midst of all these festivities. No more does your letter of the 8th, which I received yesterday: it is the one that is to come after the 16th, that I shall receive graciously.

Friday 24th.

NOT satisfied with the rays of glory that reached Twickenham, I came to town to bask in your success; but am most disagreeably disappointed to find you must beat the French once more, who seem to love to treat the English mob with subjects for bonfires. I had got over such an alarm, that I foolishly ran into the other extreme, and concluded there was not a French battalion left entire upon the face of Germany. Do write to me; don't be out of humour, but tell me every motion you make: I assure you I have deserved you should. Would you were out of the question, if it

¹ The victory obtained by prince Ferdinand of Brunswic over the marechal de Broglie and the prince de Soubise at Kirk Denckirk.

² Her present majesty.

were

were only that I might feel a little humanity! There is not a blacksmith or linkboy in London that exults more than I do, upon any good news, since you went abroad. What have I to do to hate people I never saw, and to rejoice in their calamities! Heaven send us peace, and you home! Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XLIII.

Strawberry-hill.

THIS is the 5th of August, and I just receive your letter of the 17th of last month by Fitzroy¹. I heard he had lost his pocket-book with all his dispatches, but had found it again. He was a long time finding the letter for me.

You do nothing but reproach me; I declare I will bear it no longer, though you should beat forty more marshals of France. I have already writ you two letters that would fully justify me if you receive them; if you do not, it is not I that am in fault for not writing, but the post-offices for reading my letters, content if they would forward them when they have done with them. They seem to think, like you, that I know more news than any body. What is to be known in the dead of summer, when all the world is dispersed? Would you know who won the sweep-stakes at Huntingdon? What parties are at Woburn? What officers upon guard in Betty's fruit-shop? Whether the peeresses are to wear long or short tresses at the coronation? How many jewels lady ——— borrows of actresses? All this is your light summer wear for conversation; and if my memory were as much stuffed with it as my ears, I might have sent you volumes last week. My nieces, lady W——, and mrs. K——, were here five days, and discussed the claim or disappointment of every miss in the kingdom for maid of honour. Unfortunately this new generation is not at all my affair.

¹ George Fitzroy, afterwards created lord Southampton.

I cannot

78 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

I cannot attend to what concerns them—Not that their trifles are less important than those of one's own time, but my mould has taken all its impressions, and can receive no more. I must grow old upon the stock I have. I, that was so impatient at all their chat, the moment they were gone, flew to my lady Suffolk, and heard her talk with great satisfaction of the late queen's coronation-petticoat. The preceding age always appears respectable to us (I mean as one advances in years), one's own age interesting, the coming age neither one nor t'other.

You may judge by this account that I have writ *all* my letters, or ought to have written them; and yet, for occasion to blame me, you draw a very pretty picture of my situation; all which tends to prove that I ought to write to you every day, whether I have any thing to say or not. I am writing, I am building—both *works that will outlast the memory of battles and heroes!* Truly, I believe, the one will as much as t'other. My buildings are paper, like my writings, and both will be blown away in ten years after I am dead; if they had not the substantial use of amusing me while I live, they would be worth little indeed. I will give you one instance that will sum up the vanity of great men, learned men, and buildings altogether. I heard lately, that Dr. ———, a very learned personage, had consented to let the tomb of Aylmer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, a very great personage, be removed for Wolfe's monument; that at first he had objected, but was wrought upon by being told that *high* Aylmer was a knight templar, a very wicked set of people as his lordship had heard, tho' he knew nothing of them, as they are not mentioned by Longinus. I own I thought this a made story, and wrote to his lordship, expressing my concern that one of the finest and most ancient monuments in the abbey should be removed, and begging, if it was removed, that he would bestow it on me, who would erect and preserve it here. After a fortnight's deliberation, the bishop sent me an answer, civil indeed, and commending my zeal for antiquity! but avowing the story under his own hand. He said, that at first they had taken Pembroke's tomb for a knight templar's. Observe, that not only the man who shows the tombs names it every day, but that there is a draught of it at large in Dart's Westminster; that upon discovering whose it was, he had been very unwilling to consent to the removal, and at last had obliged Wilton to engage to set it up within ten feet of where it stands at present. His lordship concluded with congratulating me on publishing learned authors at my press. I don't wonder that a man who thinks Lucan

a learned

a *learned* author, should mistake a tomb in his own cathedral. If I had a mind to be angry, I could complain with reason; as, having paid forty pounds for ground for my mother's tomb, that the chapter of Westminster fell their church over and over again; the ancient monuments tumble upon one's head thro' their neglect, as one of them did, and killed a man at lady Elizabeth Percy's funeral; and they erect new waxen dolls of queen of Elizabeth, &c. to draw visits and money from the mob. I hope all this history is applicable to some part or other of my letter; but letters you will have, and so I send you one, very like your own stories that you tell your daughter: There was a king, and he had three daughters, and they all went to see the tombs; and the youngest, who was in love with Aylmer de Valence, &c.

Thank you for your account of the battle; thank prince Ferdinand for giving you a very honourable post, which, in spite of his teeth and yours, proved a very safe one; and above all, thank prince Soubize, whom I love better than all the German princes in the universe. Peace, I think, we must have at last, if you beat the French, or at least hinder them from beating you, and afterwards starve them. Buffy's last *last* courier is expected; but as he may have a last last *last* courier, I trust no more to this than to all the others. He was complaining t'other day to Mr. Pitt of our haughtiness, and said it would drive the French to some desperate effort; thirty thousand men, continued he, would embarrass you a little, I believe! Yes, truly, replied Pitt, for I am so embarrassed with those we have already, I don't know what to do with them.

Adieu! Don't fancy that the more you scold, the more I will write: It has answered three times, but the next cross word you give me shall put an end to our correspondence. Sir Horace Mann's father used to say, Talk, Horace, you have been abroad:—you cry, Write, Horace, you are at home. No, sir, you can beat an hundred and twenty thousand French, but you cannot get the better of me. I will not write such foolish letters as this every day, when I have nothing to say.

Yours as you behave,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Of Kirk Denckirk.

LETTER

LETTER XLIV.

Arlington-street, Sept. 9, 1761.

THE date of my promise is now arrived, and I fulfil it—fulfil it with great satisfaction, for the queen is come; I have seen her, have been presented to her—and may go back to Strawberry. For this fortnight I have lived upon the road between Twickenham and London: I came, grew impatient, returned; came again, still to no purpose. The yachts made the coast of Suffolk last Saturday, on Sunday entered the road of Harwich, and on Monday morning the king's chief eunuch, as the Tripoline ambassador calls lord A. landed the princess. She lay that night at lord Abercorn's at Witham, the palace of silence; and yesterday at a quarter after three arrived at St. James's. In half an hour one heard of nothing but proclamations of her beauty: every body was content, every body pleased. At seven one went to court. The night was sultry. About ten the procession began to move towards the chapel, and at eleven they all came up into the drawing-room. She looks very sensible, chearful, and is remarkably genteel. Her tiara of diamonds was very pretty, her stomacher sumptuous; her violet-velvet mantle and ermine so heavy, that the spectators knew as much of her upper half as the king himself. You will have no doubts of her sense by what I shall tell you. On the road they wanted her to curl her toupet: she said she thought it looked as well as that of any of the ladies sent to fetch her; if the king bid her, she would wear a periwig, otherwise she would remain as she was. When she caught the first glimpse of the palace, she grew frightened and turned pale; the duchess of Hamilton smiled—the princess said, "My dear duchess, you may laugh, you have been married twice, but it is no joke to me." Her lips trembled as the coach stopped, but she jumped out with spirit, and has done nothing but with good humour and chearfulness. She talks a great deal—is easy, civil, and not disconcerted. At first, when the bride-maids and the court were introduced to her, she said, "Mon Dieu, il y en a tant, il y en a tant!" She was pleased when she was to kiss the peeresses; but lady Augusta was forced to take her hand and give it to those that were to kiss it, which was prettily humble and good-natured. While they waited for supper, she sat down, sung, and played. Her French is tolerable, she exchanged much both of that and German, with the king, the Duke, and the duke of York. They

They did not get to bed till two. To-day was a drawing-room : every body was presented to her ; but she spoke to nobody, as she could not know a soul. The crowd was much less than at a birth-day, the magnificence very little more. The king looked very handsome, and talked to her continually with great good-humour. It does not promise as if they two would be the two most unhappy persons in England, from this event. The bride-maids, especially lady Caroline Russel, lady Sarah Lenox, and lady Elizabeth Keppel, were beautiful figures. With neither features nor air, lady Sarah was by far the chief angel. The duchess of Hamilton was almost in possession of her former beauty to-day ; and your other duchess¹, your daughter, was much better dressed than ever I saw her. Except a pretty lady Sutherland, and a most perfect beauty, an Irish miss Smith², I don't think the queen saw much else to discourage her : my niece³, lady Kildare, Mrs. Fitzroy, were none of them there. There is a ball to-night, and two more drawing-rooms ; but I have done with them. The duchess of Queensberry and lady Westmorland were in the procession, and did credit to the ancient nobility.

You don't presume to suppose, I hope, that we are thinking of you, and wars, and misfortunes and distresses, in these festival times. Mr. Pitt himself would be mobbed if he talked of any thing but clothes, and diamonds, and bride maids. Oh ! yes, we have wars, civil wars ; there is a campaign opened in the bed-chamber. Every body is excluded but the ministers ; even the lords of the bed-chamber, cabinet-counsellors, and foreign ministers : but it has given such offence that I don't know whether lord Huntingdon must not be the scape-goat. Adieu ! I am going to transcribe most of this letter to your countess.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ The duchess of Richmond.

² Afterwards married to Mr. Matthew, now lord Landaff.

³ The countess of Waldegrave.

LETTER XLV.

Arlington-street, Sept. 25, 1761.

THIS is the most unhappy day I have known of years: Buffy goes away! Mankind is again given up to the sword! Peace and you are far from England!

Strawberry-hill.

I was interrupted this morning, just as I had begun my letter, by lord Waldegrave; and then the duke of Devonshire sent for me to Burlington-house to meet the duchess of Bedford, and see the old pictures from Hardwicke. If my letter reaches you three days later, at least you are saved from a lamentation. Buffy has put off his journey to Monday (to be sure, you know this is Friday): he says this is a strange country, he can get no waggoner to carry his goods on a Sunday. I am glad a Spanish war waits for a conveyance, and that a waggoner's *veto* is as good as a tribune's of Rome, and can stop Mr. Pitt on his career to Mexico. He was going post to conquer it—and Beckford, I suppose, would have had a contract for remitting all the gold, of which Mr. Pitt never thinks, unless to serve a city-friend. It is serious that we have discussions with Spain, who says France is humbled enough, but must not be ruined. Spanish gold is actually coining in frontier towns of France; and the privilege which Biscay and two other provinces have of fishing on the coast of Newfoundland, has been demanded for all Spain. It was refused peremptorily; and Mr. secretary Cortez¹ insisted yesterday se'nnight on recalling lord Bristol². The rest of the council, who are content with the world they have to govern, without conquering others, prevailed to defer this impetuosity. However, if France or Spain are the least untractable, a war is inevitable: nay, if they don't submit by the first day of the session, I have no doubt but Mr. Pitt will declare it himself on the address. I have no opinion of Spain intending it: they give France money to protract a war, from which they reap such advantages in their peaceful capacity; and I should think would not give their money if they were on the point of having occasion for it themselves. In spite of you, and all the old barons our ancestors, I pray that we may

¹ Mr. Pitt, then secretary of state.² The English ambassador at the court of Madrid.

have

have done with glory, and would willingly burn every Roman and Greek historian who have done nothing but transmit precedents for cutting throats.

The coronation is over : 'tis even a more gorgeous sight than I imagined. I saw the procession and the hall ; but the return was in the dark. In the morning they had forgot the sword of state, the chairs for king and queen, and their canopies. They used the lord mayor's for the first, and made the last in the hall : so they did not set forth till noon ; and then, by a childish compliment to the king, reserved the illumination of the hall till his entry, by which means they arrived like a funeral, nothing being discernible but the plumes of the knights of the bath, which seemed the herse. Lady Kildare, the duchess of Richmond, and lady Pembroke, were the capital beauties. Lady Harrington, the finest figure at a distance ; old Westmorland, the most majestic. Lady Hertford could not walk, and indeed I think is in a way to give us great anxiety. She is going to Ragley to ride. Lord Beauchamp was one of the king's train-bearers. Of all the incidents of the day, the most diverting was, what happened to the queen. She had a retiring-chamber, with *all* conveniencies, prepared behind the altar. She went thither—in the *most convenient*, what found she but—the duke of Newcastle ! Lady Hardwicke died three days before the ceremony, which kept away the whole house of Yorke. Some of the peeresses were dressed over night, slept in arm-chairs, and were waked if they tumbled their heads. Your sister Harris's maid, lady Peterborough, was a comely figure. My lady Cowper refused, but was forced to walk with lady M——. Lady Falmouth was not there ; on which George Selwyn said, that those peeresses who were most used to *walk*, did not. I carried my lady Townshend, lady Hertford, lady Anne Conolly, my lady Hervey, and Mrs. Clive, to my deputy's house at the gate of Westminster-hall. My lady Townshend said she should be very glad to see a coronation, as she never had seen one. “ Why,” said I, “ madam, you walked at the last ? ” “ Yes, child,” said she, “ but I saw nothing of it : I only looked to see who looked at me.” The duchess of Queensberry walked : her affectation that day was to do nothing preposterous. The queen has been at the opera, and says she will go once a week. This is a fresh disaster to our box, where we have lived so harmoniously for three years. We can get no alternative but that over miss Chudleigh's ; and lord Strafford and lady M—— C—— will not subscribe, unless we can. The duke of Devonshire and I are negotiating with all our art to keep our

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party together. The crowds at the opera and play when the king and queen go, are a little greater than what I remember. The late royalties went to the Haymarket, when it was the fashion to frequent the other opera in Lincoln's-inn-fields. Lord Chesterfield one night came into the latter, and was asked, If he had been at the other house? "Yes," said he, "but there was nobody but the king and queen; and as I thought they might be talking business, I came away."

Thank you for your journals: the best route you can send me would be of your journey homewards. Adieu!

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. If you ever hear from, or write to, such a person as lady A——, pray tell her she is worse to me in point of correspondence than ever you said I was to you, and that she sends me every thing but letters.

LETTER XLVI.

Arlington-street, October 12, 1767.

IT is very lucky that you did not succeed in the expedition to Rochfort. Perhaps you might have been made a peer; and as *Chatham* is a naval title, it might have fallen to your share. But it was reserved to crown greater glory: and lest it should not be substantial pay enough, three thousand pounds a year for three lives go along with it. Not to Mr. Pitt—you can't suppose it. Why truly, not the title, but the annuity does, and lady Hester is the baroness; that, if he should please, he may earn an earldom himself. Don't believe me, if you have not a mind. I know I did not believe those who told it me. But ask the gazette that swears it—ask the king, who has kissed lady Hester—ask the city of London, who are ready to tear Mr. Pitt to pieces—ask forty people I can name who are overjoyed at it—and then ask me again, who am mortified, and who have been the dupe of his disinterestedness. Oh, my dear Harry! I beg you on my knees, keep your virtue: do let me think there is still one man upon earth who despises money.

I wrote

I wrote you an account last week of his resignation. Could you have believed that in four days he would have tumbled from the conquest of Spain to receiving a quarter's pension from Mr. West? To-day he has advertised his seven coach-horses to be sold—Three thousand a year for three lives, and fifty thousand pounds of his own, will not keep a coach and six. I protest I believe he is mad, and lord Temple thinks so too; for he resigned the same morning that Pitt accepted the pension. George Grenville is minister in the house of commons. I don't know who will be speaker. They talk of Prowse, Hufsey, Bacon, and even of old sir John Rushout. Delaval has said an admirable thing: he blames Pitt—not as you and I do; but calls him fool; and says, if he had gone into the city, told them he had a poor wife and children unprovided for, and had opened a subscription, he would have got five hundred thousand pounds, instead of three thousand pounds a year. In the mean time the good man has saddled us with a war which we can neither carry on nor carry off. 'Tis pitiful! 'tis wondrous pitiful! Is the communication stopped, that we never hear from you? I own 'tis an Irish question. I am out of humour: my visions are dispelled, and you are still abroad. As I cannot put Mr. Pitt to death, at least I have buried him: here is his epitaph:

Admire his eloquence—It mounted higher
Than Attic purity, or Roman fire:
Adore his services—our Lions view
Ranging, where Roman eagles never flew:
Copy his soul supreme o'er Lucre's sphere;
—But oh! beware three thousand pounds a year!

October 13.

Jemmy Grenville resigned yesterday. Lord Temple is all hostility; and goes to the drawing-room to tell every body how angry he is with the court—but what is sir Joseph Wittol, when Nol Bluff is pacific? They talk of erecting a tavern in the city, called The Salutation: the sign to represent Lord Bath and Mr. Pitt embracing. These are shameful times. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* Secretary to the treasury.

LETTER XLVII.

Strawberry-hill, October 26, 1761.

HOW strange it seems ! You are talking to me of the king's wedding, while we are thinking of a civil war. Why, the king's wedding was a century ago, almost two months ; even the coronation that happened half an age ago, is quite forgot. The post to Germany cannot keep pace with our revolutions. Who knows but you may still be thinking that Mr. Pitt is the most disinterested man in the world ? Truly, as far as the votes of a common-council can make him so, he is. Like Cromwell, he has always promoted the self-denying ordinance, and has contrived to be excused from it himself. The city could no longer choose who should be their man of virtue ; there was not one left : by all rules they ought next to have pitched upon one who was the oldest offender : instead of that, they have re-elected the most recent ; and, as if virtue was a borough, Mr. Pitt is re-chosen for it, on vacating his seat. Well, but all this is very serious : I shall offer you a prophetic picture, and shall be very glad if I am not a true soothsayer. The city have voted an address of thanks to Mr. Pitt, and given instructions to their members ; the chief articles of which are, to promote an inquiry into the disposal of the money that has been granted, and to consent to no peace, unless we are to retain all, or very near all, our conquests. Thus the city of London usurp the right of making peace and war. But is the government to be dictated to by one town ? By no means. But suppose they are not—what is the consequence ? How will the money be raised ? If it cannot be raised without them, Mr. Pitt must again be minister : that you think would easily be accommodated. Stay, stay ; he and lord Temple have declared against the whole cabinet council. Why, that they have done before now, and yet have acted with them again. It is very true ; but a little word has escaped Mr. Pitt, which never entered into his former declarations ; nay, nor into Cromwell's, nor Hugh Capet's, nor Julius Cæsar's, nor any reformer's of ancient time. He has happened to say, he will *guide*. Now, though the cabinet council are mighty willing to be guided, when they cannot help it, yet they wish to have appearances saved : they cannot be fond of being told they are to be guided ; still less, that other people should be told so. Here, then, is Mr. Pitt and the common-council on one hand, the great lords on the other. I protest, I do not

see but it will come to this. Will it allay the confusion, if Mr. Fox is retained on the side of the court? Here are no whigs and tories, harmless people, that are content with worrying one another for 150 years together. The new parties are, *I will*, and *You shall not*; and their principles do not admit delay. However, this age is of suppler mould than some of its predecessors; and this may come round again, by a coup de baguette, when one least expects it. If it should not, the honestest part one can take is to look on, and try if one can do any good if matters go too far.

I am charmed with the Castle of Hercules¹; it is the boldest pile I have seen since I travelled in Fairyland. You ought to have delivered a princess imprisoned by enchanters in his club: she, in gratitude, should have fallen in love with you: your constancy should have been immaculate. The devil knows how it would have ended—I don't—And so I break off my romance.

You need not beat the French any more this year: it cannot be ascribed to Mr. Pitt; and the mob won't thank you. If we are to have a warm campaign in parliament, I hope you will be sent for. Adieu! We take the field to-morrow se'nnight.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. You will be sorry to hear that Worktop is burned. My lady Waldegrave has got a daughter, and your brother an ague.

LETTER XLVIII.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 9, 1762.

Nondum laurus erat, longoque decentia crine
Tempora cingebat de qualibet arbore Phoebus.

THIS is a hint to you, that as Phoebus, who was certainly your superior, could take up with a chestnut garland, or any crown he found, you must

¹ Alluding to a description of a building in Hesse Cassel, given by Mr. Conway in one of his letters.

have

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have the humility to be content without laurels, when none are to be had : you have hunted far and near for them, and taken true pains to the last in that old nursery-garden Germany, and by the way have made me shudder with your last journal : but you must be easy with qualibet other arbore ; you must come home to your own plantations. The duke of Bedford is gone in a fury to make peace, for he cannot be even pacific with temper ; and by this time I suppose the duke de Nivernois is unpacking his portion of olive *dans la rue de Suffolk-street*. I say, I suppose—for I do not, like my friends at Arthur's, whip into my post-chaise to see every novelty. My two sovereigns, the duchess of G—— and lady M—— C——, are arrived, and yet I have seen neither Polly nor Lucy. The former, I hear, is entirely French ; the latter as absolutely English.

Well ! but if you insist on not doffing your cuirass, you may find an opportunity of wearing it. The storm thickens. The city of London are ready to hoist their standard ; treason is the bon ton at that end of the town ; seditious papers pasted up at every corner : nay, my neighbourhood is not unfashionable ; we have had them at Brentford and Kingston. The Peace is the cry ; but to make weight, they throw in all the abusive ingredients they can collect. They talk of your friend the duke of Devonshire's resigning ; and, for the duke of Newcastle, it puts him so much in mind of the end of queen Anne's time, that I believe he hopes to be minister again for another forty years.

In the mean time there are but dark news from the Havannah ; the Gazette, who would not fib for the world, says, we have lost but four officers : the World, who is not quite so scrupulous, says, our loss is heavy. —But what shocking notice to those who have *Harry Conways* there ! The Gazette breaks off with saying, that they were to storm the next day ! Upon the whole, it is regarded as a preparative to worse news.

Our next monarch was christened last night, George Augustus Frederic ; the princess, the duke of Cumberland, and duke of Mecklenburgh, sponsors ; the ceremony performed by the bishop of London. The queen's bed, magnificent, and they say in taste, was placed in the great drawing-room : though she is not to see company in form, yet it looks as if they had intended people should have been there, as all who presented themselves were admitted,

mitted, which were very few, for it had not been notified; I suppose to prevent too great a crowd—All I have heard named, besides those in waiting, were the duchess of Queensberry, lady Dalkeith, Mrs. Grenville, and about four more ladies.

My lady A—— is abominable: she settled a party to come hither, and put it off for a month; and now she has been here and seen my cabinet, she ought to tell you what good reason I had not to stir. If she has not told you that it is the finest, the prettiest, the newest and the oldest thing in the world, I will not go to Park-place on the 20th, as I have promised. Oh! but tremble you may for me, though you will not for yourself—all my glories were on the point of vanishing last night in a flame! The chimney of the new gallery, which chimney is full of deal-boards, and which gallery is full of shavings, was on fire at eight o'clock. Harry had quarrelled with the other servants, and would not sit in the kitchen; and to keep up his anger had lighted a vast fire in the servants' hall, which is under the gallery. The chimney took fire; and if Margaret had not smelt it with the first nose that ever a servant had, a quarter of an hour had set us in a blaze. I hope you are frightened out of your senses for me: if you are not, I will never live in a panic for three or four years for you again.

I have had lord March and the Rena^r here for one night; which does not raise my reputation in the neighbourhood, and may usher me again for a Scotchman into The North Briton^s. I have had too a letter from a Ger-

* A fashionable courtesan.

* The favourable opinion given by Mr. Walpole of the abilities of the Scotch in The royal and noble authors, first drew upon him the notice of The North Briton. The passage alluded to is the following in the second number of that paper: "Mr. Horace Walpole, in that deep book called The royal and noble authors, says, We are the most accomplished nation in Europe; the nation to which, if any one country is endowed with a superior partition of sense, [and he ought to have added, of humour and taste, in both which we excel] I should be inclined to give the preference in that particular. How faithful is this masterly pen of Mr. Walpole! How unlike the odious

sharp and strong incision pen of Swift! He has called us only a poor FIERCE northern people; and has asserted, that the pensions and employments possessed by the natives of Scotland in England, amounted to more than the whole body of their nobility ever spent at home; and that all the money they raised upon the public was hardly sufficient to defray their civil and military lists. This was at the latter end of queen Anne's reign. How very different is the case now! I beg to recommend Mr. Walpole, too, for so very particular a compliment (which I hope flowed from his heart still more than from his head), and I entreat his lordship to put him on the list immediately after my countrymen and the Cocoa."

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man that I never saw, who tells me, that, hearing by chance how well I am with my lord Bute, he desires me to get him a place. The North Briton first recommended me for an employment, and has now given me interest at the backstairs. It is a notion, that whatever is said of one, has generally some kind of foundation: surely I am a contradiction to this maxim! yet, was I of consequence enough to be remembered, perhaps posterity would believe that I was a flatterer! Good-night!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XLIX.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 28, 1762.

TO my sorrow and your wicked joy, it is a doubt whether monsieur de Nivernois will shut the temple of Janus. We do not believe him quite so much in earnest, as the dove we have sent, who has summoned his turtle to Paris. She sets out the day after to-morrow, escorted, to add gravity to the embassy, by George Selwyn. The stocks don't mind this journey of a rush, but draw in their horns every day. We can learn nothing of the Havannah, though the axis on which the whole treaty turns. We believe, for we have never seen them, that the last letters thence brought accounts of great loss, especially by the sickness. Colonel Burgoyne² has given a little fillip to the Spaniards, and shown them, that though they can take Portugal from the Portuguese, it will not be entirely so easy to wrest it from the English. Lord Pulteney³, and my nephew⁴, lady Waldegrave's brother, distinguished themselves. I hope your hereditary prince is recovering of the wounds in his loins; for they say he is to marry princess Augusta. Lady A¹ has told you, to be sure, that I have been at Park-place.

¹ The duke of Bedford, then ambassador at Paris.

² Colonel, afterwards general Burgoyne, with the comte de Lippe, commanded the British troops sent to the relief of Portugal.

³ Only son of William Pulteney, earl of Bath. He died before his father.

⁴ Edward, only son of sir Edward Walpole. He died in 1771.

Every thing there is in beauty; and, I should think, pleasanter than a campaign in Germany. Your countess is handsomer than fame; your daughter improving every day; your plantations more thriving than the poor woods about Marburg and Cassel. Chinese pheasants swarm there.—For lady C—, I assure you, she sits close upon her egg, and it will not be her fault if she does not hatch a hero. We missed all the glories of the installation¹, and all the false, and all the frowning faces there. Not a knight was absent, but the lame and the deaf.

Your brother, lady Hertford, and lord Beauchamp, are gone from Windsor into Suffolk. Henry², who has the genuine indifference of a *Harry Conway*, would not stir from Oxford for those pageants. Lord Beauchamp showed me a couple of his letters, which have more natural humour and cleverness than is conceivable. They have the ease and drollery of a man of parts who has lived long in the world—and he is scarce seventeen!

I am going to Lord Waldegrave's³ for a few days, and, when your countess returns from Goodwood, am to meet her at C—'s. Lord Strafford⁴, who has been terribly alarmed about my lady, mentions, with great pleasure, the letters he receives from you. His neighbour and cousin, lord Rockingham, I hear, is one of the warmest declaimers at Arthur's against the present system. Abuse continues in much plenty, but I have seen none that I thought had wit enough to bear the sea. Good-night. There are satiric prints enough to tapestry Westminster-hall.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Stay a moment: I recollect telling you a lie in my last, which, though of no consequence, I must correct. The right reverend midwife, Thomas Secker, archbishop, did christen the babe, and not the bishop of London, as I had been told by matron authority. A-propos to babes: Have you read

¹ An installation of knights of the garter.

² Henry Seymour Conway, second son of Francis, earl and afterward marquis of Hertford.

³ James, second earl of Waldegrave, knight

of the garter, had married Maria, second daughter of sir Edward Walpole.

⁴ William Wentworth, earl of Strafford, married lady Anne Campbell, third daughter of John duke of Argyll.

Russell's education? I had almost got through a volume at Park-place, though impatiently edited as more of autobiography than any of his works, and his eloquence. Sure he has writ more sense and more nonsense than even any man did of both. All I have yet learned from this work is, that one should have a tutor for one's son to teach him to have no ideas. In order that he may begin to learn his alphabet as we lose his maidenhead, no blind one could almost wish you were as worthless and as great as the king. Thursday noon, 30th.

To Havannah! To Albemarle! I had sealed my letter, and given it to Harry for the post; when my lady Suffolk sent me a short note from Charles Townshend, to say the Havannah surrendered on the 12th of August, and that we have taken twelve ships of the line in the harbour. The news came late last night. I do not know a particular more. God grant no more blood be shed! I have hopes again of the peace. My dearest Harry, now we have preserved you to the last moment, do take care of yourself. When one has a whole war to wade through, it is not worth while to be careful in any one battle, but it is silly to fling one's self away in the last. Your character is established, prince Ferdinand's letters are full of encomiums on you, but what will weigh more with you, save yourself for another war, which I doubt you will live to see, and in which you may be superior commander, and have space to display your talents. A second forgery is never remembered, whether the honour of the victory be owing to him, or he killed. Furenie would have a very short paragraph, if the prince of Condé had been general, when he fell. Adieu.

LETTER L.

Arlington-street, October 4, 1762.

I AM concerned to hear you have been so much out of order, but should rejoice your sole command¹ disappointed you, if this late cannonading business² did not destroy all my little prospects. Can one believe the French negotiators are sincere, when their marshals are so false? What vexes me

¹ During lord Granby's absence from the army in Flanders the command in chief had devolved on Mr. Conway.

² The affair of Bucker-Muhl. See Annual Register for the year 1762, page 49.

more

more is to hear you seriously tell your brother that you are always unlucky, and lose all opportunities of fighting. How can you be such a child? You cannot, like a German, love fighting for its own sake. No, you think of the mob of London, who, if you had taken Peru, would forget you the first Lord Mayor's Day, or for the first hyena that comes to town. How can one build on virtue and on fame too? When do they ever go together? In my passion, I could almost wish you were as worthless and as great as the king of Prussia! If conscience is a punishment, is not it a reward too? Go to that silent tribunal, and be satisfied with its sentence.

I have nothing new to tell you. The Havannah is more likely to break off the peace than to advance it. We are not in a humour to give up the world; and are much more disposed to conquer the rest of it. We shall have some cannonading here, I believe, if we sign the peace. Mr. Pitt, from the bosom of his retreat, has made Beekford mayor. The duke of Newcastle, if not taken in again, will probably end his life as he began it—at the head of a mob. Personalities and abuse, public and private, increase to the most outrageous degree, and yet the town is at the emptiest. You may guess what will be the case in a month. I do not see at all into the storm; I do not mean that there will not be a great majority to vote any thing; but there are times when even majorities cannot do all they are ready to do. Lord Bute has certainly great luck, which is something in politics, whatever it is in logic; but whether peace or war, I would not give him much for the place he will have this day twelve months. Adieu! The watchman goes past one in the morning; and as I have nothing better than reflections and conjectures to send you, I may as well go to bed.

LETTER I.

LETTER LI.

I AM concerned to hear you have been so much out of order, but should be disappointed you, if this late cannonading did not take my philosophy very kindly, as it was meant; but I suppose you smile a little in your sleeve to hear me turn moralist. Yet why should not I? Must every absurd young man prove a foolish old one? Not that I intend, when the latter term is quite arrived, to profess preaching; nor should, I believe, have talked so gravely to you, if your situation had

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had not made me grave. Till the campaign is ended, I shall be in no humour to smile. For the war, when it will be over, I have no idea. The peace is a jack-o'-lanthorn that dances before one's eyes, is never approached, and at best seems ready to lead some folks into a woeful quagmire.

As your brother was in town, and I had my intelligence from him, I concluded you would have the same, and therefore did not tell you of this last revolution, which has brought Mr. Fox again upon the scene. I have been in town but once since; yet learned enough to confirm the opinion I had conceived, that the building totters, and that this last buttress will but push on its fall. Besides the clamorous opposition already encamped, The World talks of another, composed of names not so often found in a mutiny. What think you of the great duke¹, and the little duke², and the old duke³, and the Derbyshire duke⁴, banded together against the favourite? If so, it proves the court, as the late lord G— wrote to the mayor of Litchfield, will have a majority in every thing but numbers. However, my letter is a week old before I write it: things may have changed since last Tuesday. Then the prospect was *des plus* gloomy. Portugal at the eve of being conquered—Spain preferring a diadem to the mural crown of the Havannah—a squadron taking horse for Naples, to see whether king Carlos has any more private bowels than public, whether he is a better father than brother. If what I heard yesterday be true, that the parliament is to be put off till the 24th, it does not look as if they were ready in the green-room, and despised catcalls.

You bid me send you the flower of brimstone, the best things published in this season of outrage. I should not have waited for orders, if I had met with the least tolerable morsel. But this opposition ran stark mad at once, cursed, swore, called names, and has not been one minute cool enough to have a grain of wit. Their prints are gross, their papers scurrilous; indeed the authors abuse one another more than any body else. I have not seen a single ballad or epigram. They are as ferociously dull as if the controversy was religious. I do not take in a paper of either side; and being very indif-

- ¹ Of Cumberland.
- ² Of Bedford.
- ³ Of Newcastle.

- ⁴ Of Devonshire.
- ⁵ John Stuart earl of Bute.

ferent,

ferent, the only way of being impartial, they shall not make me pay till they make me laugh. I am here quite alone, and shall stay a fortnight longer, unless the parliament prorogued lengthens my holidays. I do not pretend to be so indifferent, to have so little curiosity, as not to go and see the duke of Newcastle frightened for his country—the only thing that never yet gave him a panic. Then I am still such a schoolboy, that though I could guess half their orations, and know *all* their meaning, I must go and hear Cæsar and Pompey scold in the Temple of Concord. As this age is to make such a figure hereafter, how the Gronoviuses and Warburtons would despise a senator that deserted the forum when the masters of the world harangued! For, as this age is to be historic, so of course it will be a standard of virtue too; and we, like our wicked predecessors the Romans, shall be quoted, till our very ghosts blush, as models of patriotism and magnanimity. What lectures will be read to poor children on this æra! Europe taught to tremble, the great king humbled, the treasures of Peru diverted into the Thames, Asia subdued by the gigantic Clive! for in that age men were near seven feet high; France suing for peace at the gates of Buckingham-house, the steady wisdom of the duke of Bedford drawing a circle round the Gallic monarch, and forbidding him to pass it till he had signed the cession of America; Pitt more eloquent than Demosthenes, and trampling on proffered pensions like—I don't know who; lord Temple sacrificing a brother to the love of his country; Wilkes as spotless as Sallust, and the Flamen Churchill, knocking down the foes of Britain with statues of the gods!—Oh! I am out of breath with eloquence and prophecy, and truth and lies: my narrow chest was not formed to hold inspiration; I must return to piddling with my painters; those lofty subjects are too much for me. Good night!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I forgot to tell you that Gideon, who is dead worth more than the whole land of Canaan, has left the reversion of all his milk and honey, after his son and daughter and their children, to the duke of Devonshire, without insisting on his taking the name, or even being circumcised.

Charles Churchill the poet.

Lord

96 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

Lord Albemarle is expected home in December. My nephew Keppel¹ is bishop of Exeter, not of the Havannah, as you may imagine, for his mitre was promised the day before the news came.

LETTER LII.

Strawberry-hill, February 28, 1763.

YOUR letter of the 19th seems to postpone your arrival rather than advance it; yet lady A. tells me that to her you talk of being here in ten days. I wish devoutly to see you, though I am not departing myself; but I am impatient to have your disagreeable function² at an end, and to know that you enjoy yourself after such fatigues, dangers, and ill-requited services. For any public satisfaction you will receive in being at home, you must not expect much. Your mind was not formed to float on the surface of a mercenary world. My prayer (and my belief) is, that you may always prefer what you always have preferred, your integrity to success. You will then laugh, as I do, at the attacks and malice of faction or ministers. I taste of both; but, as my health is recovered, and my mind does not reproach me, they will perhaps only give me an opportunity, which I should never have sought, of proving that I have some virtue—and it will not be proved in the way they probably expect. I have better evidence than by hanging out the tattered ensigns of patriotism. But this and a thousand other things I shall reserve for our meeting. Your brother has pressed me much to go with him, if he goes, to Paris³. I take it very kindly, but have excused myself, though I have promised either to accompany him for a short time at first, or to go to him if he should have any particular occasion for me: but my resolution against ever appearing in any public light is unalterable. When I wish to live less and less in the world here, I cannot think of mounting a new stage at Paris. At this moment I am alone here, while every body is balloting in the house of commons. Sir John Philips proposed a commission of accounts, which has been converted into a select committee of 21, eligible by ballot. As the ministry is not predominant in the

¹ Frederick Keppel, youngest brother of George earl of Albemarle, who commanded at taking the Havannah, had married Laura, eldest daughter of sir Edward Walpole.

² The re-embarkation of the British troops from Flanders after the peace.

³ As ambassador.

affections

affections of mankind, some of them may find a jury elected that will not be quite so complaisant as the house is in general when their votes are given *openly*. As many may be glad of this opportunity, I shun it; for I should scorn to do any thing in secret, though I have some enemies that are not quite so generous.

You say you have seen the North Briton in which I make a capital figure. Wilkes, the author, I hear, says, that if he had thought I should have taken it so well, he would have been damned before he would have written it—but I am not fore where I am not fore.

The theatre at Covent-garden has suffered more by riots than even Drury-lane. A footman of lord Dacre has been hanged for murdering the butler. George Selwyn had great hand in bringing him to confess it. That Selwyn should be a capital performer in a scene of that kind is not extraordinary: I tell it you for the strange coolness which the young fellow, who was but nineteen, expressed: as he was writing his confession, "I murd—" he stopped, and asked, "How do you spell *murdered*?"

Mr. Fox is much better than at the beginning of the winter; and both his health and power seem to promise a longer duration than people expected. Indeed I think the latter is so established, that lord B—— would find it more difficult to remove him, than he did his predecessors, and may even feel the effects of the weight he has made over to him; for it is already obvious that lord B——'s levée is not the present path to fortune. Permanence is not the complexion of these times—a distressful circumstance to the votaries of a court, but amusing to us spectators. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LIII.

Strawberry-hill, May 1, 1763.

I FEEL happy at hearing your happiness; but, my dear Harry, your vision is much indebted to your long absence, which

Makes bleak rocks and barren mountains smile.

VOL. V.

O

I mean

I mean no offence to Park-place, but the bitterness of the weather makes me wonder how you can find the country tolerable now. This is a May-day for the latitude of Siberia! The milk-maids should be wrapped *in the motherly comforts of a swan-skin petticoat*. In short, such hard words have passed between me and the north wind to day, that, according to the language of the times, I was very near abusing it for coming from Scotland, and to imputing it to lord B——. I don't know whether I should not have written a North Briton against it, if the printers were not all sent to Newgate, and Mr. Wilkes to the Tower—ay, to the Tower, tout de bon. The new ministry are trying to make up for their ridiculous insignificance by a coup d'eclat. As I came hither yesterday, I do not know whether the particulars I have heard are genuine—but in the Tower he certainly is, taken up by lord Halifax's warrant for treason; vide the North Briton of Saturday was se'nnight. It is said he refused to obey the warrant, of which he asked and got a copy from the two messengers, telling them he did not mean to make his escape, but sending to demand his habeas corpus, which was refused. He then went to lord Halifax, and thence to the Tower; declaring they should get nothing out of him but what they knew. All his papers have been seized. Lord chief justice Pratt, I am told, finds great fault with the wording of the warrant.

I don't know how to execute your commission for books of architecture, nor care to put you to expence, which I know will not answer. I have been consulting my neighbour young Mr. Thomas Pitt¹, my present architect: we have all books of that sort here, but cannot think of one which will help you to a cottage or a green-house. For the former you should send me your idea, your dimensions; for the latter, don't you rebuild your old one, though in another place? A pretty green-house I never saw; nor without immoderate expence can it well be an agreeable object. Mr. Pitt thinks a mere portico without a pediment, and windows removeable in summer, would be the best plan you could have. If so, don't you remember something of that kind, which you liked, at sir Charles Cotterel's at Rousham? But a fine green-house must be on a more exalted plan. In short, you must be more particular, before I can be at all so.

I called at Hammersmith yesterday about lady A——'s tubs; one of

¹ Afterwards created lord Camelford.

them

them is nearly finished, but they will not both be completed these ten days. Shall they be sent to you by water? Good-night to her ladyship and you, and the Infanta¹, whose progress in waxen statuary I hope advances so fast, that by next winter she may rival Rackstraw's old man. Do you know that, though apprised of what I was going to see, it deceived me, and made such impression on my mind, that, thinking on it as I came home in my chariot, and seeing a woman steadfastly at work in a window in Pall-mall, it made me start to see her move. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Arlington-street, Monday night.

THE mighty commitment set out with a blunder; the warrant directed the printer, and all concerned (unnamed) to be taken up. Consequently Wilkes had his habeas corpus of course, and was committed again; moved for another in the common-pleas, and is to appear there to-morrow morning. Lord Temple being, by another strain of power, refused admittance to him, said, "I thought this was the Tower, but find it is the Bastille." They found among Wilkes's papers an unpublished North Briton, designed for last Saturday. It contained advice to the king not to go to St. Paul's on the thanksgiving, but to have a snug one in his own chapel; and to let lord G—S— carry the sword. There was a dialogue in it too between Fox and Calcraft: the former says to the latter, "I did not think you would have served me so, Jemmy Twitcher."

LETTER LIV.

Arlington-street, May 6, very late, 1763.

THE complexion of the times is a little altered since the beginning of this last winter. Prerogative, that gave itself such airs in November, and would speak to nothing but a Tory, has had a rap this morning that will do

¹ Anne Seymour Conway, whose genius for sculpture has since distinguished itself in more durable materials. E.

it some good, unless it is weak enough to do itself more harm. The judges of the common-pleas have unanimously dismissed Wilkes from his imprisonment, as a breach of privilege; his offence not being a breach of the peace, only tending to it. The people are in transports; and it will require all the vanity and confidence of those able ministers lord S. and Mr. C. to keep up the spirits of the court.

I must change this tone, to tell you of the most dismal calamity that ever happened. Lady Moleworth's house, in Upper Brook-street, was burned to the ground between four and five this morning. She herself, two of her daughters, her brother, and six servants, perished. Two other of the young ladies jumped out of the two pair of stairs and garret windows: one broke her thigh, the other (the eldest of all) broke her's too, and has had it cut off. The fifth daughter is much burnt. The French governess leaped from the garret, and was dashed to pieces. Dr. Moleworth and his wife, who were there on a visit, escaped; the wife by jumping from the two pair of stairs, and saving herself by a rail; he by hanging by his hands, till a second ladder was brought, after a first had proved too short. Nobody knows how or where the fire began; the catastrophe is shocking beyond what one ever heard; and poor lady Moleworth, whose character and conduct were the most amiable in the world, is universally lamented. Your good hearts will feel this in the most lively manner.

I go early to Strawberry to-morrow, giving up the new opera, madame de Boufflers, and Mr. Wilkes, and all the present topics. Wilkes, whose case has taken its place by the side of the seven bishops, calls himself the eighth—not quite improperly, when one remembers that sir Jonathan Trelawney, who swore like a trooper, was one of those confessors.

There is a good letter in the Gazetteer on the other side, pretending to be written by lord Temple, and advising Wilkes to cut his throat, like lord E, as it would be of infinite service to their cause. There are published, too, three volumes of lady Mary Wortley's letters, which I believe are genuine, and are not unentertaining—But have you read Tom Hervey's letter to the late king? That beats every thing for madness, horrid indecency, and folly, and yet has some charming and striking passages.

I have

I have advised Mrs. H. to inform against Jack, as writing in the North Briton; he will then be shut up in the Tower, and may be shown for old Nero¹. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LV.

Arlington-street, May 21, 1763.

YOU have now seen the celebrated madame de Boufflers². I dare say you could in that short time perceive that she is agreeable, but I dare say too that you will agree with me that vivacity is by no means the partage of the French—bating the étourderie of the mousquetaires and of a high-dried petit-maitre or two, they appear to me more lifeless than Germans. I cannot comprehend how they came by the character of a lively people. Charles Townshend has more *sal volatile* in him than the whole nation. Their king is taciturnity itself; Mirepoix was a walking mummy; Nivernois has about as much life as a sick favourite child; and monsieur Duffon is a good-humoured country gentleman, who has been drunk the day before, and is upon his good behaviour. If I have the gout next year and am thoroughly humbled by it again, I will go to Paris, that I may be upon a level with them: at present, I am *trop fou* to keep them company. Mind, I do not insist that, to have spirits, a nation should be as frantic as poor —, as absurd as the duchess of Queensberry, or as dashing as the Virgin Chudleigh. Oh, that you had been at her ball t'other night! History could never describe it and keep its countenance. The queen's real birth-day, you know, is not kept: this maid of honour kept it—nay, while the court is in mourning, expected people to be out of mourning; the queen's family really was so, lady Northumberland having desired leave for them. A scaffold was erected in Hyde-park for fireworks. To show the illuminations without to more advantage, the company were received in an apartment

¹ An old lion there, so called, in England for two or three years with her
² The comtesse de Boufflers, who, since the daughter-in-law the comtesse Emilie de Bouff-
 revolution in France of the year 1789, resided fiers.

totally dark, where they remained for two hours—If they gave rise to any more birth-days, who could help it? The fireworks were fine, and succeeded well. On each side of the court were two large scaffolds for the Virgin's tradespeople. When the fireworks ceased, a large scene was lighted in the court, representing their majesties; on each side of which were six obelisks, painted with emblems, and illuminated; mottos beneath in Latin and English: 1. For the prince of Wales, a ship, *Multorum spes*. 2. For the princess dowager, a bird of Paradise, and two little ones, *Meos ad sidera tollo*. People smiled. 3. Duke of York, a temple, *Virtuti & honori*. 4. Princess Augusta, a bird of Paradise, *Non habet parem*—unluckily this was translated, *I have no peer*. People laughed out, considering where this was exhibited. 5. The three younger princes, an orange-tree, *Promittit & dat*. 6. The two younger princesses, the flower crown-imperial. I forget the Latin: the translation was silly enough, *Bashful in youth, graceful in age*. The lady of the house made many apologies for the poorness of the performance, which she said was only oil-paper, painted by one of her servants; but it really was fine and pretty. The duke of Kingston was in a frock, *comme chez lui*. Behind the house was a cenotaph for the princess Elizabeth, a kind of illuminated cradle; the motto, *All the honours the dead can receive*. This burying-ground was a strange codicil to a festival; and, what was more strange, about one in the morning, this sarcophagus burst out into crackers and guns. The margrave of Anspach began the ball with the Virgin. The supper was most sumptuous.

You ask, when I propose to be at Park-place. I ask, Shall not you come to the duke of Richmond's masquerade, which is the 2d of June? I cannot well be with you till towards the end of that month.

The inclosed is a letter which I wish you to read attentively, to give me your opinion upon it, and return it. It is from a sensible friend of mine in Scotland, who has lately corresponded with me on the inclosed subjects, which I little understand; but I promised to communicate his ideas to George Grenville, if he would state them—Are they practicable? I wish much that something could be done for those brave soldiers and sailors, who will all come to the gallows, unless some timely provision can be made for them.—The former part of his letter relates to a grievance he complains of, that

that men who have *not* served, are admitted into garrisons, and then into our hospitals, which were designed for meritorious sufferers¹. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LVI.

Arlington-street, Saturday evening.

NO, indeed I cannot consent to your being a dirty Philander². Pink and white, white and pink! and both as greasy as if you had gnawed a leg of a fowl on the stairs of the Hay-market with a bunter from the Cardigan's Head! For heaven's sake don't produce a tight rose-coloured thigh, unless you intend to prevent my lord ——'s return from Harrowgate. Write, the moment you receive this, to your tailor to get you a sober purple domino as I have done, and it will make you a couple of summer waistcoats.

In the next place, have your ideas a little more correct about us of times past. We did not furnish our cottages with chairs of ten guineas a piece. Ebony for a farm-house³! So, two hundred years hence some man of taste will build a hamlet in the style of George the third, and beg his cousin Tom Hearne to get him some chairs for it of mahogany gilt, and covered with blue damask. Adieu! I have not a minute's time more.

Yours, &c.

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ As this letter is not to be found, no farther light can be thrown on its contents. little building beautifully situated on the brow of the hill at Park-place, and called the Cottage,

² At the masquerade given by the duke of Richmond on the 6th of June, 1763, at his house in Privy-garden. though indeed containing a very good room towards the prospect in the Gothic style, for which he had consulted Mr. Walpole on the propriety of ebony chairs. E.

³ Mr. Conway was at this time sitting up the

LETTER

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LETTER LVII.

Strawberry-hill, August 9, 1763.

MY gallery claims your promise; the painters and gilders finish tomorrow, and next day it washes its hands. You talked of the 15th; shall I expect you then, and the countess¹, and the contessina² and the baroness³?

Lord Digby is to be married immediately to the pretty miss Fielding; and Mr. Boothby, they say, to lady Mary Douglas. What more news I know I cannot send you; for I have had it from lady Denbigh and lady Blandford⁴, who have so confounded names, genders, and circumstances, that I am not sure whether prince Ferdinand is not going to be married to the Hereditary Prince. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. If you want to know more of me, you may read a whole column of abuse upon me in the Public Ledger of Thursday last; where they inform me that the Scotch cannot be so sensible as the English, because they have not such good writers. Alack! I am afraid *the most sensible* men in any country do *not* write.

I had writ this last night. This morning I receive your paper of evasions, perfide que vous êtes! You may let it alone, you will never see any thing like my gallery—And then to ask me to leave it the instant it is finished! I never heard such a request in my days!—Why, all the earth is begging to come to see it: as Edging says, I have had offers enough from blue and green ribbands to make me a falbala-apron. Then I have just refused to let Mrs. K—— and her bishop be in the house with me, because I expected all you—It is mighty well, mighty fine!—No, sir, no, I shall not

¹ Of Ailesbury.

Lyttelton.

² Miss Anne Seymour Conway.

⁴ They were both Dutch women, and spoke

³ Elizabeth Rich, second wife of George lord very bad English.

come;

come; nor am I in a humour to do any thing else you desire: indeed, without your provoking me, I should not have come into the proposal of paying Giardini. We have been duped and cheated every winter for these twenty years by the undertakers of operas, and I never will pay a farthing more till the last moment, nor can be terrified at their puffs; I am astonished you are. So far from frightening me, the kindest thing they could do, would be not to let one have a box to hear their old thread-bare voices and frippery thefts; and as for Giardini himself, I would not go cross the room to hear him play to eternity. I should think he could frighten nobody but lady Bingley by a refusal.

LETTER LVIII.

Arlington-street, April 19, 1764.

I AM just come from the duchess of Argyll's¹, where I dined. General Warburton was there, and said it was the report at the house of lords, that you are turned out—He imagined, of your regiment—but that I suppose is a mistake for the bedchamber². I shall hear more to-night, and lady Strafford, who brings you this, will tell you; though to be sure you will know earlier by the post to-morrow. My only reason for writing is, to repeat to you, that whatever you do I shall act with you³. I resent any thing done to you as to myself. My fortunes shall never be separated from yours—except that some time or other I hope yours will be great, and I am content with mine.

The Manns go on with the business⁴—The letter you received was from Mr. Edward Mann, not from Gal's widow. Adieu! I was going to say, my *disgraced* friend—How delightful to have a character so unspotted, that the word *disgrace* recoils on those who displace you!

Yours unalterably,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Widow of John Campbell, duke of Argyll. She was sister to general Warburton, and had been maid of honour to queen Anne.

² Mr. Conway was dismissed from all his employments, civil and military, for having opposed the ministry in the house of commons, on

the question of the legality of general warrants, at the time of the prosecution of Mr. Wilkes for the publication of *The North Briton*. E.

³ Mr. Walpole was then in the house of commons, member for King's Lynn in Norfolk.

⁴ Of army-clothiers.

LETTER LIX.

Strawberry-hill, Saturday night, eight o'clock, April 21, 1764.

I WRITE to you with a very bad head-ach; I have passed a night, for which — and the duke of — shall pass many an uneasy one! Notwithstanding I heard from every body I met, that your regiment, as well as bedchamber, were taken away, I would not believe it, till last night the duchess of G—— told me, that the night before the duchess of —— said to her, "Are not you very sorry for poor Mr. Conway? He has lost every thing." When the witch of Endor pities, one knows she has raised the devil.

I am come hither alone to put my thoughts into some order, and to avoid showing the first fallies of my resentment, which I know you would disapprove; nor does it become your friend to rail. My anger shall be a little more manly, and the plan of my revenge a little deeper laid than in peevish bons-mots. You shall judge of my indignation by its duration.

In the mean time, let me beg you, in the most earnest and most sincere of all professions, to suffer me to make your loss as light as it is in my power to make it: I have six thousand pounds in the funds; accept all, or what part you want. Do not imagine I will be put off with a refusal. The retrenchment of my expences, which I shall from this hour commence, will convince you that I mean to re-place your fortune as far as I can. When I thought you did not want it, I had made another disposition. You have ever been the dearest person to me in the world. You have shown that you deserve to be so.—You suffer for your spotless integrity.—Can I hesitate a moment to show that there is at least one man who knows how to value you? The new will, which I am going to make, will be a testimonial of my own sense of virtue.

One circumstance has heightened my resentment. If it was *not* an accident, it deserves to heighten it. The very day on which your dismissal was notified, I received an order from the treasury for the payment of what money was due to me there. Is it possible that they could mean to make any distinction between us? Have I separated myself from you?

Is

Is there that spot on earth where I can be suspected of having paid court? Have I even left my name at a minister's door, since you took your part? If they have dared to hint this, the pen that is now writing to you will bitterly undeceive them.

I am impatient to see the letters you have received, and the answers you have sent. Do you come to town? If you do not, I will come to you to-morrow se'nnight, that is, the 29th. I give no advice on any thing, because you are cooler than I am—not so cool, I hope, as to be insensible to this outrage, this villainy, this injustice! You owe it to your country to labour the extermination of such ministers!

I am so bad a hypocrite, that I am afraid of showing how deeply I feel this. Yet last night I received the account from the duchess of G—— with more temper than you believe me capable of: but the agitation of the night disordered me so much, that lord John Cavendish, who was with me two hours this morning, does not, I believe, take me for a hero. As there are some who I know would enjoy my mortification, and who probably designed I should feel my share of it, I wish to command myself—but that struggle shall be added to their bill. I saw nobody else before I came away but Legge, who sent for me and wrote the inclosed for you. He would have said more both to you and lady A——, but I would not let him, as he is so ill: however, he thinks himself that he shall live. I hope he will! I would not lose a shadow that can haunt these ministers.

I feel for lady A——, because I know she feels just as I do—and it is not a pleasant sensation. I will say no more, though I could write volumes. Adieu!

Yours, as I ever have been and ever will be,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LX.

Arlington-street, April 24, 1764.

I REJOICE that you feel your loss¹ so little: that you act with dignity and propriety does not surprise me. To have you behave in character and with character, is my first of all wishes; for then it will not be in the power of man to make you unhappy. Ask yourself—Is there a man in England with whom you would change character?—Is there a man in England who would not change with you? Then think how little they have taken away!

For me, I shall certainly conduct myself as you prescribe. *Your* friend shall say and do nothing unworthy of *your* friend. You govern me in every thing but one: I mean the disposition I have told you I shall make². Nothing can alter that, but a great change in your fortune. In another point you partly misunderstood me. That I shall explain hereafter.

I shall certainly meet you here on Sunday, and very cheerfully. We may laugh at a world in which nothing of us will remain long but our characters. Adieu! the dear family!

Yours eternally,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXI.

Arlington-street, June 5, 1764.

YOU will wonder that I have been so long without giving you any signs of life; yet, though not writing *to* you, I have been employed *about* you, as I have ever since the 21st of April; a day your enemies shall have some cause to remember. I had writ nine or ten sheets of an answer to the *Address to the Public*, when I received the inclosed *mandate*³. You will see

¹ Of his employments.² Of leaving a considerable part of his fortune to Mr. Conway.³ The paper here alluded to does not appear.

my masters order me, as a subaltern of the exchequer, to drop you and defend them—but you will see too, that, instead of obeying, *I have given warning*. I would not communicate any part of this transaction to you, till it was out of my hands, because I knew your affection for me would not approve my going so far—But it was necessary. My honour required that I should declare my adherence to you in the most authentic manner. I found that some persons had dared to doubt whether I would risk every thing for you. You see by these letters that Mr. Grenville himself had presumed so. Even a change in the administration, however unlikely, might happen before I had any opportunity of declaring myself; and then those who should choose to put the worst construction, either on my actions or my silence, might say what they pleased. I was waiting for some opportunity: they have put it into my hands, and I took care not to let it slip. Indeed they have put more into my hands, which I have not let slip neither. Could I expect they would give me so absurd an account of Mr. Grenville's conduct, and give it me in writing? They can only add to this obligation that of provocation to print my letter, which, however strong in facts, I have taken care to make very decent in terms, because it imports us to have the candid (that is, I fear, the mercenary) on our side.—No, that we must not expect, but at least disarmed.

Lord Tavistock has flung his handkerchief to lady Elizabeth Keppel. They all go to Woburn on Thursday, and the ceremony is to be performed as soon as her brother, the bishop, can arrive from Exeter. I am heartily glad the duchess of Bedford does not set her heart on marrying me to any body; I am sure she would bring it about. She has some small intention of coupling my niece and ———, but I have forbidden the banns.

The birth-day, I hear, was lamentably empty. We had a funereal lull last night in the great chamber at lady Bel Finch's: the Duke, princess Emily, and the duchess of Bedford were there. The princess entertained her grace with the joy the duke of Bedford will have in being a grandfather; in which reflection, I believe, the grandmotherhood was not forgotten. Adieu!

LETTER

LETTER LXII.

September 1, 1764.

I SEND you the reply to The counter-address¹; it is the lowest of all Grub-street, and I hear is treated so. They have nothing better to say, than that I am in love with you, have been so these twenty years, and am no giant. I am a very constant old swain: they might have made the years above thirty; it is so long I have had the same unalterable friendship for you, independent of being near relations and bred up together. For arguments, so far from any new ones, the man gives up or denies most of the former. I own I am rejoiced not only to see how little they can defend themselves, but to know the extent of their malice and revenge! They must be sorely hurt, when reduced to such scurrility. Yet there is one paragraph, however, which I think is of ————'s own inditing. It says, *I flattered, solicited, and then basely deserted him.* I no more expected to hear myself accused of flattery, than of being in love with you; but I shall not laugh at the former as I do at the latter. Nothing but his own consummate vanity could suppose I had ever stooped to flatter *him*! or that any man was connected with him, but who was low enough to be paid for it. Where has he one such attachment?

You have your share too—The miscarriage at Rochfort now directly laid at your door: repeated insinuations against your courage:—but I trust you will mind them no more than I do, excepting the *flattery*, which I shall not forget, I promise them.

I came to town yesterday on some business, and found a case.—When I opened it, what was there but my lady A———'s most beautiful of all pictures²! Don't imagine I can think it intended for me, or that, if it could be so, I would hear of such a thing. It is far above what can be parted with, or accepted. I am serious—there is no letting such a picture, when one has accomplished it, go from where one can see it every day.

¹ A pamphlet wrote by Mr. Walpole, in answer to another, called "*An address to the public on the late dismissal of a general officer.*" The counter address is published in the second volume of this edition. E.

² A landscape executed in worsteds by lady Ailesbury. It is now at Strawberry-hill.

TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY. III

I should take the thought equally kind and friendly, but ~~she~~ must let me bring it back, if I am not to do any thing else with it, and it came by mistake. I am not so selfish to deprive her of what she must have such pleasure in seeing. I shall have more satisfaction in seeing it at Park-place; where, in spite of the worst kind of malice, I shall persist in saying my heart is fixed. They may ruin me, but no calumny shall make me desert you. Indeed your case would be completely cruel, if it was more honourable for your relations and friends to abandon you than to stick to you. My option is made, and I scorn their abuse as much as I despise their power.

I think of coming to you on Thursday next for a day or two, unless your house is full, or you hear from me to the contrary. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R LXIII.

Strawberry-hill, October 5, 1764.

IT is over with us!—If I did not know your firmness, I would have prepared you by degrees; but you are a man, and can hear the worst at once. The duke of Cumberland¹ is dead. I have heard it but this instant. The duke of Newcastle was come to breakfast with me, and had pulled out a letter from lord Frederick, with a hopeless account of the poor duke of Devonshire. Ere I could read it, colonel Schutz called at the door and told my servant this fatal news! I know no more—it must be at Newmarket, and very sudden; for the duke of Newcastle had a letter from Hodgson, dated on Monday, which said the duke was perfectly well, and his gout gone:—yes, to be sure, into his head. Princess Amelia had endeavoured to prevent his going to Newmarket, having perceived great alteration in his speech, as the duke of Newcastle had.—Well! it will not be.—Every thing fights against this country! Mr. Pitt must save it himself—or, what I do

¹ William duke of Cumberland, son of George the second.

not

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not know whether he will not like as well, share in overturning its liberty—if they will admit him ; which I question now if they will be fools enough to do.

You see I write in despair. I am for the whole, but perfectly tranquil. We have acted with honour, and have nothing to reproach ourselves with. We cannot combat fate. We shall be left almost alone ; but I think you will no more go with the torrent than I will. Could I have foreseen this tide of ill fortune, I would have done just as I have done ; and my conduct shall show I am satisfied I have done right. For the rest, come what come may, I am perfectly prepared ! and while there is a free spot of earth upon the globe, that shall be my country. I am sorry it will not be this, but to-morrow I shall be able to laugh as usual. What signifies what happens when one is seven-and-forty, as I am to-day ?

“ They tell me ’tis my birth-day ”—but I will not go on with Antony, and say

————— “ and I’ll keep it
With double pomp of sadness.”—

No ; when they can smile, who ruin a great country, sure those who would have saved it may indulge themselves in that cheerfulness which conscious integrity bestows. I think I shall come to you next week ; and since we have no longer any plan of operations to settle, we will look over the map of Europe, and fix upon a pleasant corner for our exile—for take notice, I do not design to fall upon my dagger, in hopes that some Mr. Addison a thousand years hence may write a dull tragedy about me. I will write my own story a little more cheerfully than he would ; but I fear now I must not print it at my own press. Adieu ! You was a philosopher before you had any occasion to be so : pray continue so ; you have ample occasion !

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER LXIV.

Strawberry-hill, October 13, 1764.

LORD John Cavendish has been so kind as to send me word of the duke of Devonshire's¹ legacy to you. You cannot doubt of the great joy this gives me; and yet it serves to aggravate the loss of so worthy a man! And when I feel it thus, I am sensible how much more it will add to your concern, instead of diminishing it. Yet do not wholly reflect on your misfortune. You might despise the acquisition of five thousand pounds simply; but when that sum is a public testimonial to your virtue, and bequeathed by a man so virtuous, it is a million! Measure it with the riches of those who have basely injured you, and it is still more! Why, it is glory, it is conscious innocence, it is satisfaction—it is affluence without guilt.—Oh! the comfortable sound! It is a good name in the history of these corrupt days. There it will exist, when the wealth of your and their country's enemies will be wasted, or will be an indelible blemish on their descendants.

My heart is full, and yet I will say no more. My best loves to all your opulent family. Who says virtue is not rewarded in this world? It is rewarded by virtue, and it is persecuted by the bad: Can greater honour be paid to it?

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXV.

Strawberry-hill, October 29, 1764.

I AM glad you mentioned it: I would not have had you appear without your close mourning for the duke of Devonshire upon any account. I was once going to tell you of it, knowing your inaccuracy in such matters; but thought it still impossible you should be ignorant how necessary it is. Lord

¹ William, fourth duke of Devonshire. During his administration in Ireland Mr. Conway had been secretary of state there.

Strafford, who has a legacy of only 200*l.* wrote to consult lady Suffolk. She told him, for such a sum, which only implies a ring, it was sometimes not done; but yet advised him to mourn. In your case it is indispensable; nor can you see any of his family without it. Besides, it is much better on such an occasion to over, than under do. I answer this paragraph first, because I am so earnest not to have you blamed.

Besides wishing to see you all, I have wanted exceedingly to come to you, having much to say to you; but I am confined here, that is, Mr. Chute¹ is: he was seized with the gout last Wednesday se'nnight, the day he came hither to meet George Montagu, and this is the first day he has been out of his bed-chamber. I must therefore put off our meeting till Saturday, when you shall certainly find me in town.

We have a report here, but the authority bitter bad, that lord March is going to be married to ——. I don't believe it the less for our knowing nothing of it; for unless their daughter were breeding, and it were to save her character, neither — nor — would disclose a tittle about it. Yet in charity they should advertise it, that parents and relations, if it is so, may lock up all knives, ropes, laudanum, and rivers, lest it should occasion a violent mortality among his fair admirers.

I am charmed with an answer I have just read in the papers of a poor man in Bedlam, who was ill used by an apprentice because he would not tell him why he was confined there. The unhappy creature said at last, "Because God has deprived me of a blessing which you never enjoyed." There never was any thing finer or more moving! Your sensibility will not be quite so much affected by a story I heard t'other day of sir Fletcher Norton. He has a mother—yes, a mother: perhaps you thought, that, like that tender urchin Love,

— duris in cotibus *illum*

Ismarus, aut Rhodope, aut extremi Garamantes,
Nec nostri generis puerum nec sanguinis edunt.

Well, Mrs. Rhodope lives in a mighty shabby hovel at Preston, which the dutiful and affectionate sir Fletcher began to think not suitable to the dig-

¹ John Chute, esq. of the Vine in Hampshire.

TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY. 115

nity of one who has the honour of being his parent. He cheapened a better, in which were two pictures which the proprietor valued at threescore pounds. The *attorney* insisted on having them for nothing, as fixtures—the landlord refused, the bargain was broken off, and the dowager madam Norton remains in her original hut. I could tell you another story which you would not dislike; but as it might hurt the person concerned, if it was known, I shall not send it by the post; but will tell it you when I see you. Adieu!

Yours most cordially,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXVI.

Wednesday noon, July 3, 1765.

THE footing part of my dance with my shocking partner the gout is almost over. I had little pain there this last night, and got, at twice, about three hours sleep; but whenever I waked found my head very bad, which Mr. Graham thinks gouty too. The fever is still very high: but the same sage is of opinion, with my lady Londonderry, that if it was a fever from death, I should die; but as it is only a fever from the gout, I shall live. I think so too, and hope that, like the duke and duchess of Marlborough, they are so inseparable, that when one goes, t'other will.

Tell lady A——, I fear it will be long before I shall be able to compass all your terraces again.

The weather is very hot, and I have the comfort of a window open all day. I have got a bushel of roses too, and a new scarlet nightingale, which does *not* sing Nancy Dawson from morning to night. Perhaps you think all these poor pleasures; but you are ignorant what a provocative the gout is, and what charms it can bestow on a moment's amusement! Oh! it beats all the refinements of a Roman sensualist. It has made even my watch a darling plaything; I strike it as often as a child does. Then the disorder of my sleep diverts me when I am awake. I dreamt that I went to see

Q²

madame

madame de Bentheim at Paris, and that she had the prettiest palace in the world, built like a pavilion, of yellow laced with blue; that I made love to her daughter, whom I called mademoiselle bleue et jaune, and thought it very clever.

My next reverie was very serious, and lasted half an hour after I was awake; which you will perhaps think a little light-headed, and so do I. I thought Mr. Pitt had had a conference with madame de Bentheim, and granted all her demands. I rung for Louis at six in the morning, and wanted to get up and inform myself of what had been kept so secret from me. You must know, that all these visions of madame de Bentheim flowed from George Selwyn telling me last night, that she had carried most of her points, and was returning. What stuff I tell you!—But, alas! I have nothing better to do, sitting on my bed, and wishing to forget how brightly the sun shines, when I cannot be at Strawberry.

L E T T E R LXVII.

Amiens¹, Wednesday, Sept. 11, 1765.

BIAU COUSIN,

I HAVE had a very prosperous journey till just at entering this city. I escaped a prince of Nassau at Dover, and sickness at sea, though the voyage lasted seven hours and a half. I have recovered my strength surprisingly in the time; though almost famished for want of clean victuals, and comfortable tea and bread and butter. Half a mile from hence I met a coach and four with an equipage of French, and a lady in pea-green and silver, a smart hat and feather, and two suivantes. My reason told me it was the archbishop's concubine; but luckily my heart whispered that it was lady ——. I jumped out of my chaise—yes, jumped, as Mrs. Nugent said of herself, fell on my knees, and said my first ave-maria, gratiâ plena! We just shot a few politics flying—heard that madame de Mirepoix had toasted me t'other day in tea—shook hands, forgot to weep, and parted; she to

¹ Mr. Walpole having had a long and dangerous fit of gout in the antecedent summer, was advised to try change of air for the re-

establishment of his health, and left London on his way to Paris, September the 9th, 1765. E.

the

the hereditary princefs, I to this inn, where is actually refident the duchefs of Douglas. We are not likely to have any intercourfe, or I would declare myfelf a Hamilton¹.

I find this country wonderfully enriched fince I faw it four-and-twenty years ago. Boulogne is grown quite a plump imug town, with a number of new houfes. The worft villages are tight, and wooden fhoes have difappeared. Mr. Pitt and the city of London may fancy what they will, but France will not come a-begging to the Manfion-houfe this year or two. In truth, I impute this air of opulence a little to ourfelves. The crumbs that fall from the chaises of the fwarms of Englifh that vifit Paris, muft have contributed to fatten this province. It is plain I muft have little to do when I turn my hand to calculating: but here is my obfervation. From Boulogne to Paris it will coft me near ten guineas; but then confider, I travel alone, and carry Louis moft part of the way in the chaise with me. Nos autres milords Anglois are not often fo frugal. Your brother², laft year, had ninety-nine Englifh to dinner on the king's birth-day. How many of them do you think dropped fo little as ten guineas on this road? In fhort, there are the feeds of a calculation for you; and if you will water them with a torrent of words, they will produce fuch a differtation, that you will be able to vie with George Grenville next feffion in plans of national œconomy—only be fure not to tax travelling till I come back, loaded with purchafes; nor, till then, propagate my ideas. It will be time enough for me to be thrifty of the nation's money, when I have fpent all my own.

Clermont, 12th.

WHILE they are getting my dinner, I continue my journal. The duchefs of Douglas (for Englifh are generally the moft extraordinary perfons that we meet with even out of England) left Amiens before me, on her way home. You will not guefs what ſhe carries with her—Oh! nothing that will hurt our manufactures; nor what George Grenville himfelf would feize. One of her fervants died at Paris; ſhe had him embalmed, and the body is tied before her chaise:—a droll way of being chief mourner!

¹ The memorable¹ caufe between the houfes of Douglas and Hamilton was then pending.

² Francis earl of Hertford, then embaffador at Paris.

For

118 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

For a French absurdity, I have observed that along the great roads they plant walnut-trees, but strip them up for firing. It is like the owl that bit off the feet of mice, that they might lie still and fatten.

At the foot of this hill is an old-fashioned chateau belonging to the duke of Fitz-James, with a *parc en quincunx* and clipped hedges. We saw him walking in his waistcoat and ribband, very well powdered; a figure like Guerchy. I cannot say his seat rivals Goodwood or Euston¹. I shall lie at Chantilly to-night, for I did not set out till ten this morning—not because I could not, as you will suspect, get up sooner—but because all the horses in the country have attended the queen to Nancy². Besides, I have a little underplot of seeing Chantilly and St. Denis in my way; which you know one could not do in the dark to-night, nor in winter, if I return then.

Hotel de feu madame l'Ambassadrice d'Angleterre³, Sept. 13, 7 o'clock.

I AM just arrived. My lady Hertford is not at home, and lady Anne⁴ will not come out of her burrow: so I have just time to finish this before madame returns; and Brian sets out to-night and will carry it. I find I shall have a great deal to say: formerly I observed nothing, and now remark every thing minutely. I have already fallen in love with twenty things, and in hate with forty. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ The duc de Fitz-James's father, marechal Berwick, was a natural son of James II. Mr. Walpole therefore compares his country seat with those of the dukes of Richmond and Grafton, similar descendants from his brother Charles II. E.

² Stanislaus king of Poland, father to the queen of Louis XV. lived at Nancy.

³ Lord Hertford was at this time recalled, and the duke of Richmond appointed to succeed him in the embassy at Paris.

⁴ Lady Anne Seymour Conway, afterwards married to the earl of Drogheda.

LETTER LXVIII.

Paris, October 6, 1765.

I AM glad to find you grow just, and that you do conceive at last, that I could do better than stay in England for politics. Tenez, mon enfant, as the duchesse de la Ferté said to madame Staal¹; comme il n'y a que moi au monde qui aie toujours raison, I will be very reasonable; and as you have made this concession to me, who knew I was in the right, I will not expect you to answer all my *reasonable* letters. If you send a bullying letter to the king of Spain², or to *chose*, my neighbour here³, I will consider them as written to myself, and subtract so much from your bill—Nay, I will accept a line from lady A—— now and then in part of payment. I shall continue to write as the wind sets in my pen; and do own my babble does not demand much reply.

For so reasonable a person as I am, I have changed my mind very often about this country. The first five days I was in violent spirits—then came a dismal cloud of whisky and literature, and I could not bear it. At present I begin, very *Englishly* indeed, to establish a right to my own way. I laugh, and talk nonsense, and make them hear me. There are two or three houses where I go quite at my ease, am never asked to touch a card, nor hold dissertations. Nay, I don't pay homage to their authors. Every woman has one or two planted in her house, and God knows how they water them. The old president Henault is the pagod at madame du Deffand's, an old blind debauchée of wit, where I supped last night. The president is very near deaf, and much nearer superannuated. He sits by the table: the mistress of the house, who formerly was his, inquires after every dish on the table, is told who has eaten of which, and then bawls the bill of fare of every individual into the president's ears. In short, every mouthful is proclaimed, and so is every blunder I make against grammar. Some that I make on purpose, succeed; and one of them is to be reported to the queen to-day by Henault, who is her great favourite. I had been at Versailles; and having been much taken notice of by her majesty, I said, alluding to madame de

¹ See Memoires de madame de Staal (the first authorefs of that name), published with the rest of her works in three small volumes. E.

² Mr. Conway was now secretary of state for the foreign department.

³ The king of France, Louis XV.

Seigné,

Seigné, *La reine est le plus grand roi du monde*. You may judge if I am in possession by a scene that passed after supper. Sir James Macdonald¹ had been mimicking Hume: I told the women, who, besides the mistress, were the duchesse de la Valiere, madame de Forcalquier, and a demoiselle, that to be sure they would be glad to have a specimen of Mr. Pitt's manner of speaking; and that nobody mimicked him so well as Elliot². They firmly believed it, teased him for an hour, and at last said he was the rudest man in the world not to oblige them. It appeared the more strange, because here every body sings, reads their own works in public, or attempts any one thing without hesitation or capacity. Elliot speaks miserable French; which added to the diversion.

I had had my share of distress in the morning, by going through the operation of being presented to the whole royal family, down to the little Madame's pap-dinner, and had behaved as fillily as you will easily believe; hiding myself behind every mortal. The queen called me up to her dressing-table, and seemed mightily disposed to gossip with me; but instead of enjoying my glory like madame de Seigné, I slunk back into the crowd after a few questions. She told monsieur de Guerchy of it afterwards, and that I had run away from her, but said she would have her revenge at Fontainebleau—So I must go thither, which I did not intend. The king, dauphin, dauphiness, mesdames, and the wild beast, did not say a word to me. Yes, the wild beast, he of the Gevaudan. He is killed, and actually in the queen's anti-chambre, where he was exhibited to us with as much parade as if it was Mr. Pitt. It is an exceedingly large wolf, and, the connoisseurs say, has twelve teeth more than any wolf ever had since the days of Romulus's wet-nurse. The critics deny it to be the true beast; and I find most people think the beast's name is *legion*, for there are many. He was covered with a sheet, which two chasseurs lifted up for the foreign ministers and strangers. I dined at the duke of Praslin's with five-and-twenty tomes of the corps diplomatique; and after dinner was presented, by monsieur de Guerchy, to the duc de Choiseul. The duc de Praslin is as like his own letters in D'Eon's book as he can stare; that is, I believe, a very silly fellow. His wisdom is of the grave kind. His cousin, the first

¹ An elder brother of sir A. Macdonald, the present lord chief baron of the exchequer. He died at Rome the year following, leaving behind him a distinguished character for every mental accomplishment.

² Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto.

minister, is a little volatile being, whose countenance and manner had nothing to frighten me for my country. I saw him but for three seconds, which is as much as he allows to any one body or thing. Monsieur de Guerchy*, whose goodness to me is inexpressible, took the trouble of walking every where with me, and carried me particularly to see the new office for state papers—I wish I could send it you. It is a large building, disposed like an hospital, with the most admirable order and method. Lodgings for every officer; his name and business written over his door. In the body is a perspective of seven or eight large chambers: each is painted with emblems, and wainscoted with presses with wired doors and crimson curtains. Over each press, in golden letters, the country to which the pieces relate, as Angleterre, Allemagne, &c. Each room has a large funnel of bronze with or moulu, like a column, to air the papers and preserve them. In short, it is as magnificent as useful.

From thence I went to see the reservoir of pictures at monsieur de Marigny's. They are what are not disposed of in the palaces, though sometimes changed with others. This *refuse*, which fills many rooms from top to bottom, is composed of the most glorious works of Raphael, L. da Vinci, Giorgione, Titian, Guido, Correggio, &c. Many pictures, which I knew by their prints, without an idea where they existed, I found there.

The duc de Nivernois is extremely obliging to me. I have supped at madame de Bentheim's, who has a very fine house, and a woful husband. She is much livelier than any Frenchwoman. The liveliest man I have seen is the duc de Duras: he is shorter and plumper than lord Halifax, but very like him in the face. I am to sup with the Duffons on Sunday. In short, all that have been in England are exceedingly disposed to repay any civilities they received there. Monsieur de Caraman wrote from the country to excuse his not coming to see me, as his wife is on the point of being brought-to-bed, but begged I would come to them—So I would, if I was a man-midwife: but though they are easy on such heads, I am not used to it, and cannot make a party of pleasure of a labour.

Wilkes arrived here two days ago, and announced that he was going

* He had been ambassador in England.

minister to Constantinople. To-day I hear he has lowered his credentials, and talks of going to England, if he can make his peace. I thought, by the manner in which this was mentioned to me, that the person meant to found me: but I made no answer; for, having given up politics in England, I certainly did not come to transact them here. He has not been to make me the first visit, which, as the last arrived, depends on him: so, never having spoken to him in my life, I have no call to seek him. I avoid all politics so much, that I had not heard one word here about Spain. I suppose my silence passes for very artful mystery, and puzzles the ministers, who keep spiss on the most insignificant foreigner. It would have been lucky if I had been as watchful. At Chantilli I lost my portmanteau with half my linen; and the night before last I was robbed of a new frock, waistcoat and breeches, laced with gold, a white and silver waistcoat, black velvet breeches, a knife and a book. These are expences I did not expect, and by no means entering into my system of extravagance.

I am very sorry for the death of lord Ophaly, and for his family. I knew the poor young man himself but little, but he seemed extremely good-natured. What the duke of Richmond will do for a hotel, I cannot conceive. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

As a proof that my ideas are not quite vitious, I send you a most curious paper; such as I believe no writer would have pronounced in the time of Charles I. I should not like to have it known to come from me, nor any part of the intelligence it contains to particular persons. I desire my

LETTER LXIX.

Paris, October 28, 1765.

MR. Hume² sends me word from Fontainebleau, that your brother, some time in the spring of 1764, transmitted to the English ministry a pretty *short and very authentic account of the French finances*; these are his words: *and that it will be easily found among his lordship's dispatches of that period.* To the other question I have received no answer; I suppose he has not yet been able to inform himself.

¹ After his outlawry.

² The celebrated David Hume was secretary

of embassy to the earl of Hertford during his residence at Paris.

TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY! 123

This goes by an English coachman of count Lauragais, sent over to buy more horses: therefore I shall write a little ministerially, and, perhaps, surprise you, if you are not already apprised of things in the light I see them.

The dauphin will probably hold out very few days. His death, that is, the near prospect of it, fills the *philosophers* with the greatest joy, as it was feared he would endeavour the restoration of the jesuits. You will think the sentiments of the *philosophers* very odd *state-news*—but do you know who the *philosophers* are, or what the term means here? In the first place, it comprehends almost every body; and in the next, means men, who avowing war against popery, aim, many of them, at a subversion of all religion, and still many more, at the destruction of regal power. How do you know this? you will say; you, who have been but six weeks in France, three of which you have been confined to your chamber. True: but in the first period I went every where, and heard nothing else; in the latter, I have been extremely visited, and have had long and explicit conversations with many, who think as I tell you, and with a few of the other side, who are no less persuaded that there are such intentions. In particular, I had two officers here t'other night, neither of them young, whom I had difficulty to keep from a serious quarrel, and who, in the heat of the dispute, informed me of much more than I could have learnt with great pains.

As a proof that my ideas are not quite visions, I send you a most curious paper²; such as I believe no *magistrate* would have pronounced in the time of Charles I. I should not like to have it known to come from me, nor any part of the intelligence I send you; with regard to which, if you think it necessary to communicate it to particular persons, I desire my name may be suppressed. I tell it you for *your* satisfaction and information, but would not have any body else think that I do any thing here but amuse myself: my amusements indeed are triste enough, and consist wholly in trying to get well; but my recovery moves very slowly. I have not yet had any thing but cloth shoes on, live sometimes a whole day on warm water, and am never tolerably well till twelve or one o'clock.

¹ The reader, in the year 1798, will be struck with this succinct account of *les philosophes Français*, their doctrines and their intentions, given in the year 1765, which their subsequent conduct has proved so accurately true. ² This paper does not appear.

I have had another letter from Sir Horace Mann, who has much at heart his ribband and increase of character. Consequently you know, as I love him so much, I must have them at heart too. Count Lorenzi is recalled, because here they think it necessary to send a Frenchman of higher rank to the new Grand Ducal court. I wish Sir Horace could be raised on this occasion. For his ribband, his promise is so old and so positive, that it is quite a hardship.

Pray put the colonies in good humour; I see they are violently disposed to the new administration.

I have not time to say more, nor more to say if I had time; so good night. Let me know if you receive this, and how soon it goes the day after to-morrow. Various reports say, the duke of Richmond comes this week. I sent you a letter by monsieur de Guerchy.

Duffon, I hear, goes ambassador to Poland. Tell lady A— that I have five or six little parcels, though not above one for her, of laces and ribbands, which lady C— left with me; but how to convey them the Lord knows.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXX.

Paris, November 29, 1765.

AS I answered your short letter with a very long one, I shall be shorter in answer to your long, which I received late last night from Fontainebleau: it is not very necessary; but as Lord William Gordon sets out for England on Monday, I take that opportunity.

The duke of ~~Reich~~ tells me that Choiseul has promised every thing. I wish it may be performed, and speedily, as it will give you an opportunity of opening the parliament with great éclat. My opinion you know is, that this is the moment for pushing them and obtaining.

Thank

Thank you for all you say about my gout. We have had a week of very hard frost, that has done me great good, and rebraced me. The swelling of my legs is quite gone. What has done me more good, is having entirely left off tea, to which I believe the weakness of my stomach was owing, having had no sickness since. In short, I think I am cured of every thing but my fears. You talk coolly of going as far as Naples, and propose my going with you. I would not go so far, if Naples was the direct road to the new Jerusalem. I have no thought or wish, but to get home, and be quiet for the rest of my days, which I shall most certainly do the first moment the season will let me; and if I once get to London again, shall be scarce tempted ever to lie in an inn more. I have refused to go to Aubigné, though I should lie but one night on the road. You may guess what I have suffered, when I am grown so timorous about my health. However, I am again reverted to my system of water, and trying to recover my hardiness, but nothing has at all softened me towards physicians.

You see I have given you a serious answer, though I am rather disposed to smile at your proposal. Go to Italy! for what? Oh! to quite do you know, I think that as idle a thought as the other. Stay where you are, and do some good to your country, or retire when you cannot, but don't put your finger in your eye and cry after the holidays and sugar-plums of Park-place. You have engaged and must go through, or be hindered. Could you tell the world the reason? Would not all men say you had found yourself incapable of what you had undertaken? I have no patience with your thinking so idly. It would be a reflection on your understanding and character, and a want of resolution unworthy of you.

My advice is, to ask for the first great government that falls, if you will not take your regiment again; to continue acting vigorously and honestly where you are. Things are never stable enough in our country to give you a prospect of a long slavery. Your defect is irresolution. When you have taken your post, act up to it; and if you are driven from it, your retirement will then be as honourable, and more satisfactory than your administration. I speak frankly, as my friendship for you directs. My way of acting (though a private instance) is agreeable to my doctrine. I determined, whenever our opposition should be over, to have done with politics; and you see I have adhered to my resolution by coming hither;

and

and therefore you may be convinced that I speak my thoughts. I don't ask your pardon, because I should be forced to ask my own if I did not tell you what I think the best for you. You have life and Park-place enough to come, and you have not had five months of gout. Make yourself independent honourably, which you may do by a government; but if you will take my advice, don't accept a ministerial place when you cease to be a minister. The former is a reward due to your profession and services, the latter is a degradation. You know the haughtiness of my spirit; I give you no advice but what I would follow.

I sent lady A *the Orpheline leguée*; a poor performance; but the subject made me think she would like to see it. I am over head and ears at count Caylus's auction, and have bought half of it for a song—but I am still in greater felicity and luck, having discovered, by mere accident, a portrait of count Grammont, after having been in search of one these fifteen years, and assured there was no such thing. A-propos, I promised you my own: but besides that there is nobody here that excels in painting skeletons; seriously, their painters are bitter bad, and as much inferior to Reynolds and Ramsay, as Hudson to Vandyck. I had rather stay till my return. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXI.

Paris, December 5, 1765.

I HAVE not above a note's worth to say; but as lord Offory sets out to-morrow, I just send you a line.

The dauphin, if he is still alive, which some folks doubt, is kept so only by cordials; though the bishop of Glandeve has assured the queen that he had God's own word for his recovery, which she still believes, whether her son is dead or not.

The

The remonstrance of the parliament of Paris, on the dissolution of that of Bretagne, is very decent; they are to have an audience next week. They do not touch on Chalotais, because the accusation against him is for treason. What do you think that treason is? A correspondence with Mr. Pitt, to whom he is made to say, that *Rennes is nearer to London than Paris*. It is now believed that the anonymous letters, supposed to be written by Chalotais, were forged by a jesuit—those to Mr. Pitt could not have even so good an author.

The duke of Richmond is still at Aubigné; I wonder he stays, for it is the hardest frost alive. Mr. Hume does not go to Ireland, where your brother finds he would by no means be welcome.—I have a notion he will stay here till your brother's return.

The duc de Praslin, it is said, will retire at Christmas. As La Borde, the great banker of the court, is trying to retire too, my cousin, who is much connected with La Borde, suspects that Choiseul is not very firm himself.

I have supped with monsieur de Maurepas, and another night with marshal Richelieu: the first is extremely agreeable and *sensible*; and, I am glad, not *Minister*. The other is an old piece of tawdry, worn out, but endeavouring to brush itself up; and put me in mind of lord Chesterfield, for they laugh before they know what he has said—and are in the right, for I think they would not laugh afterwards.

I send lady A — the words and music of the prettiest opera comique in the world—I wish I could send her the actors too. Adieu!

Paris, December 2, 1792.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

December 9th.

Lord Ossory put off his journey; which stopped this letter, and it will now go by Mr. Andr. Stuart.

The

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The face of things is changed here, which I am impatient to tell you, that you may see it is truth, not system, which I pique myself on sending you. The vigour of the court has frightened the parliaments. That of Pau has submitted. The procureurs, &c. of Rennes, who, it was said, would not plead before the new commission, were told, that if they did not plead the next day they should be hanged without a trial—No bribe ever operated faster!

I heard t'other day, that some Spanish minister, I forget his name, being dead, Squillace would take his department, and Grimaldi have that of the West Indies.—He is the worst that could have it, as we have no greater enemy.

The dauphin is certainly alive, but in the most shocking way possible; his bones worn through his skin, a great swelling behind, and so relaxed, that his intestines appear from that part; and yesterday the mortification was suspected.

I have received a long letter from lady A——, for which I give her a thousand thanks; and would answer it directly, if I had not told you every earthly thing I know.

The duke and duchess* are, I hear, at Fontainebleau: the moment they return, I will give the duchess lady A——'s commission.

LETTER LXXII.

Paris, January 12, 1766.

I HAVE received your letter by general Vernon, and another, to which I have writ an answer, but was disappointed of a conveyance I expected. You shall have it with additions, by the first messenger that goes; but I cannot send it by the post, as I have spoken very freely of some persons you

* Of Richmond.

name,

name, in which we agree thoroughly. These few lines are only to tell you I am not idle in writing to you.

I almost repent having come hither; for I like the way of life and many of the people so well, that I doubt I shall feel more regret at leaving Paris than I expected. It would sound vain to tell you the honours and distinctions I receive, and how much I am in fashion; yet when they come from the handsomest women in France, and the most respectable in point of character, can one help being a little proud? If I was twenty years younger, I should wish they were not quite so respectable. Madame de Brionne, whom I have never seen, and who was to have met me at supper last night at the charming madame d'Egmont's, sent me an invitation by the latter for Wednesday next. I was engaged, and hesitated. I was told, "*Comment! savez-vous que c'est qu'elle ne seroit pas pour toute la France?*" However, lest you should dread my returning a perfect old swain, I study my wrinkles, compare myself and my limbs to every plate of larks I see, and treat my understanding with at least as little mercy. Yet, do you know, my present fame is owing to a very trifling composition, but which has made incredible noise. I was one evening at madame Geoffrin's joking on Rousseau's affectations and contradictions, and said some things that diverted them. When I came home I put them into a letter, and showed it next day to Helvetius and the duc de Nivernois; who were so pleased with it, that, after telling me some faults in the language, which you may be sure there were, they encouraged me to let it be seen. As you know I willingly laugh at mountebanks *political* or literary, let their talents be ever so great, I was not averse. The copies have spread like wild-fire; *et me voici à la mode!* I expect the end of my reign at the end of the week with great composure. Here is the letter:

De Roi de PRUSSE à Monsieur ROUSSEAU.

Mon cher Jean Jacques,

Vous avez renoncé à Genève votre patrie; vous vous êtes fait chasser de la Suisse, pays tant vanté dans vos écrits; la France vous a decreté. Venez donc chez moi: j'admire vos talents; je m'amuse de vos reveries, qui (soit dit en passant) vous occupent trop, et trop long tems. Il faut à la fin être sage et heureux. Vous avez fait assez parler de vous par

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des singularités peu convenables à un véritable grand homme: Demontrez à vos ennemis, que vous pouvez avoir quelquefois le sens commun: cela les fâchera, mais vous ferez tort. Mes états vous offrent une retraite paisible; je vous veux du bien, et je vous en ferai, si vous le trouvez bon. Mais si vous vous obstinez à rejeter mon secours, attendez-vous que je ne le dirai à personne. Si vous persistez à vous creuser l'esprit pour trouver de nouveaux malheurs, choisissez les tels que vous voudrez. Je suis roi, je puis vous en procurer au gré de vos souhaits: et ce qui sûrement ne vous arrivera pas vis-à-vis de vos ennemis, je cesserai de vous persécuter quand vous cesserez de mettre votre gloire à l'être.

Votre bon ami,

FREDERIC.

The princess de Ligne, whose mother was an Englishwoman, made a good observation to me last night. She said, *Je suis roi, je puis vous procurer de malheurs*, was plainly the stroke of an English pen. I said, then I had certainly not well imitated the character in which I wrote. You will say, I am a bold man to attack both Voltaire and Rousseau. It is true; but I shoot at their heel, at their vulnerable part.

I beg your pardon for taking up your time with these trifles. The day after to-morrow we go in cavalcade with the duchess¹ to her audience²; I have got my cravat and shammy shoes. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXIII.

Paris, April 6, 1766.

IN a certain city of Europe³ it is the custom to wear flonched hats, long cloaks and high capes. Scandal and the government called this dress, going

¹ Of Richmond.

² At Versailles as ambassadress.

³ This account alludes to the insurrection at

Madrid, on the attempt of the court in the last reign to introduce the French dress in Spain. E.

in *mask*, and pretended that it contributed to assassination. An ordonnance was published, commanding free-born hats to be cocked, cloaks to be shortened, and capes laid aside. All the world obeyed for the first day; but the next, every thing returned into its old channel. In the evening a tumult arose, and cries of God bless the king! God bless the kingdom! but confusion to the prime minister!—The word was no sooner given, but his house was beset, the windows broken, and the gates attempted. The guards came and fired on the *weavers*² of cloaks. The weavers returned the fire, and many fell on each side. As the hour of supper approached and the mob grew hungry, they recollected a tax upon bread, and demanded the *repeal*. The king yielded to both requests, and hats and loaves were set at liberty. The people were not contented, and still insisted on the permission of murdering the first minister; though his majesty assured his faithful commons that the minister was never consulted on acts of government, and was only his private friend, who sometimes called upon him in an evening to drink a glass of wine and talk botany. The people were incredulous, and continued in mutiny when the last letters came away.

If you should happen to suppose, as I did, that this *history* arrived in London, do not be alarmed; for it was at Madrid; and a nation who has borne the inquisition cannot support a cocked hat!—So necessary it is for governors to know when lead or a feather will turn the balance of human understandings, or will not.

I should not have entrenched on lord George's³ province of sending you news of revolutions, but he is at Aubigné⁴; and I thought it right to advertise you in time, in case you should have a mind to send a bale of flouched hats to the support of the mutineers. As I have worn a flapped hat all my life, when I have worn any at all, I think myself qualified, and would offer my service to command them; but being persuaded that you are a faithful observer of treaties, though a friend to repeals, I shall come and receive your commands in person. In the mean time I cannot help figuring what a pompous protest my lord Lyttelton might draw up in the character of an old grandee against the revocation of the act for cocked hats.

¹ Squillace, an Italian, whom the king was obliged to banish.

² Alluding to the mobs of silk-weavers which had taken place this year in London.

³ Lord George Lenox, only brother to the duke of Richmond.

⁴ The duke of Richmond's country seat in France.

Lady A. — I forgot to send me word of your recovery, as she promised; but I was so lucky as to hear it from other hands. Pray take care of yourself, and do not imagine that you are as weak as I am, and can escape the scythe, as I do by being low: your life is of more consequence. If you don't believe me, step into the street and ask the first man you meet.

This is Sunday, and Thursday is fixed for my departure; unless the Clairon should return to the stage on Tuesday se'night, as is said; and I do not know whether I should not be tempted to borrow two or three days more, having never seen her: yet my lilacs pull hard, and I have not a farthing left in the world. Be sure you do not leave a cranny open for George Grenville to wriggle in, till I have got all my things out of the custom-house. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXIV.

Paris, April 8, 1766.

I SENT you a few lines by the post yesterday, with the first accounts of the insurrection at Madrid. I have since seen Stahrenberg, the Imperial minister, who has had a courier from thence; and if Lord Rochford has not sent one, you will not be sorry to know more particulars. The mob disarmed the invalids; stopped all coaches, to prevent Squillace's flight; and meeting the duke de Medina Celi, forced him and the duke d'Arcos to carry their demands to the king. His most frightened majesty granted them directly; on which his highness the people dispatched a monk with their demands in writing, couched in four articles: the diminution of the gabel on bread and oil; the revocation of the ordonnance on hats and cloaks; the banishment of Squillace; and the abolition of some other tax, I don't know what. The king signed all; yet was still forced to appear in a balcony, and promise to observe what he had granted. Squillace was sent with an escort to Carthagena, to embark for Naples, and the first commis of the treasury appointed to succeed him; which does not look much like observation of the conditions. Some say Ensenada is recalled, and that Grimaldi is in no good odour

odour with the people. If the latter and Squillace are dismissed, we get rid of two enemies. The tumult ceased on the grant of the demands; but the king retiring that night to Aranjuez, the insurrection was renewed the next morning, on pretence that this flight was a breach of the capitulation. The people seized the gates of the capital, and permitted nobody to go out. In this state were things when the courier came away. The ordonnance against going in disguise looks as if some suspicions had been conceived; and yet their confidence was so great as not to have 2000 guards in the town. The pitiful behaviour of the court makes one think that the Italians were frightened, and that the Spanish part of the ministry were not sorry it took that turn. As I suppose there is no great city in Spain which has not at least a bigger bundle of grievances than the capital, one shall not wonder if the pusillanimous behaviour of the king encourages them to redress themselves too.

There is what is called a change of the ministry here; but it is only a crossing over and figuring in. The duc de Praslin has wished to retire for some time; and for this last fortnight there has been much talk of his being replaced by the duc d'Aiguillon, the duc de Nivernois, &c.; but it is plain, though not believed till now, that the duc de Choiseul is all-powerful. To purchase the stay of his cousin Praslin, on whom he can depend, and to leave no cranny open, he has ceded the marine and colonies to the duc de Praslin, and taken the foreign and military department himself. His cousin is besides named chef du conseil des finances; a very honourable, very dignified and very idle place, and never filled since the duc de Bethune had it. Praslin's hopeful cousin the viscount, whom you saw in England last year, goes to Naples, and the marquis de Dursfort to Vienna—a cold, dry, proud man, with the figure and manner of lord Cornbury.

Great matters are expected to-day from the parliament, which re-assembles. A mousquetaire, his piece loaded with a lettre de cachet, went about a fortnight ago to the notary who keeps the parliamentary registers, and demanded them. They were refused—but given up, on the lettre de cachet being produced. The parliament intends to try the notary for breach of trust, which I suppose will make his fortune; though he has not the merit of perjury like ———.

There

There have been insurrections at Bourdeaux and Toulouse, on the militia, and 27 persons were killed at the latter; but both are appeased. These things are so much in vogue, that I wonder the French do not dress à la révolution. In short, it is living in a fall, and not intended to know.

The queen is in a very dangerous way.

This will be my last letter; but I am not sure I shall set out before the middle of next week.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXVI.

Bath, October 18, 1766.

LETTER LXXV.

Bath, October 2, 1766.

I ARRIVED yesterday at noon, and bore my journey perfectly well, except that I had the head-ach all yesterday; but it is gone to-day, or at least made way for a little giddiness, which the water gave me this morning at first. If it does not do me good very soon, I shall leave it; for I dislike the place exceedingly, and am disappointed in it. Their new buildings that are so admired, look like a collection of little hospitals; the rest is detestable; and all crammed together, and surrounded with perpendicular hills that have no beauty. The river is paltry enough to be the Seine or Tyber. Oh! how unlike my lovely Thames!

I met my Lord Chatham's coach yesterday full of such Grenville-looking children, that I shall not go to see him this day or two; and to-day I spoke to lady Buckingham in the street. My lords chancellor and president are here, and lord and lady Powis. Lady Malpas arrived yesterday. I shall visit miss Rich to-morrow. In the next apartment to mine lodges — I have not seen him some years; and he is grown either mad or

Mr. Walpole in general disliked being in company with children, to whom he was little accustomed. E.

super-

superannuated, and talks without cessation or coherence: you would think all the articles of a dictionary were prating together at once. The Bedfords are expected this week. There are forty thousand others that I neither know nor intend to know. In short, it is living in a fair, and I am heartily sick of it already. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXVI.

Bath, October 18, 1766.

YOU have made me laugh, and somebody else makes me stare. How can one wonder at any thing he does, when he knows so little of the world? I suppose the next step will be to propose me for groom of the bed-chamber to the new duke of Cumberland. But why me? Here is that hopeful young fellow Mr. John Rushout, the oldest member of the house, and, as extremes meet, very proper to begin again; why overlook him? However, as the secret is kept from me myself, I am perfectly easy about it. I shall call to-day or to-morrow to ask his commands, but certainly shall not obey those you mention.

The waters certainly are not so beneficial to me as at first: I have almost every morning my pain in my stomach. I do not pretend this to be the cause of my leaving Bath. The truth is, I cannot bear it any longer. You laugh at my regularity; but the contrary habit is so strong in me, that I cannot continue such sobriety. The public rooms, and the Loo, where we play in a circle, like the hazard on twelfth-night, are insupportable. This coming into the world again, when I am so weary of it, is as bad and ridiculous as moving an address would be. I have no affectation, for affectation is a monster at nine-and-forty; but if I cannot live quietly, privately, and comfortably, I am perfectly indifferent about living at all. I would not kill myself, for that is a philosopher's affectation, and I will come hither again, if I must; but I shall always drive very near, before I submit to

do

do any thing I do not like. In short, I must be as foolish as I please, as long as I can keep without the limits of absurdity. What has an old man to do but to preserve himself from parade on one hand, and ridicule on the other? Charming youth may indulge itself in either, may be censured, will be envied, and has time to correct. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Monday evening.

You are a delightful manager of the house of commons, to reckon 540, instead of 565! Sandwich was more accurate in lists, and would not have miscounted 25, which are something in a division.

LETTER LXXVII.

Strawberry-hill, August 9, 1768.

YOU are very kind, or else you saw into my mind, and knew that I have been thinking of writing to you, but had not a pen-full of matter. True, I have been in town, but I am more likely to learn news here; where at least we have it like fish, that could not find vent in London. I saw nothing there but the ruins of Loo, lady Hertford's cribbage, and lord B——, like patience on a monument, smiling in grief. He is totally ruined, and quite charmed. Yet I heartily pity him. To Virginia he cannot be indifferent: he must turn their heads some how or other. If his graces do not captivate them, he will enrage them to fury; for I take all his douceur to be enamelled on iron.

My life is most uniform and void of events, and has nothing worth repeating. I have not had a soul with me, but accidental company now and then at dinner. Lady Holderness, lady Ancram, lady Mary Coke, Mrs. Anne Pitt, and Mr. Hume, dined here the day before yesterday. They were but just gone, when George Selwyn, lord Bolinbroke, and sir William Musgrave, who had been at Hampton-court, came in, at nine at night, to

drink

drink tea. They told me, what I was very glad to hear, and what I could not doubt, as they had it from the duke of Grafton himself, that bishop Cornwallis goes to Canterbury. I feared it would be ———; but it seems he had secured all the back-stairs, and not the great stairs. As the last head of the church[†] had been on the midwife line, I suppose goody ——— had hopes; and as he had been president of an atheistical club, to be sure Warburton did not despair. I was thinking it would make a good article in the papers, that three bishops had supped with Nancy Parsons at Vauxhall, in their way to Lambeth. I am sure ——— would have been of the number; and ———, who told the duke of Newcastle, that if his grace had commanded the Blues at Minden they would have behaved better, would make no scruple to cry up her chastity.

The king of Denmark comes on Thursday; and I go to-morrow to see him. It has cost three thousand pounds to new-furnish an apartment for him at St. James's; and now he will not go thither, supposing it would be a confinement. He is to lodge at his own minister Dieden's.

Augustus Hervey, thinking it the bel air, is going to sue for a divorce from the Chudleigh. He asked lord B—— t'other day, who was his proctor, as he would have asked for his taylor. The nymph has sent him word, that if he proves her his wife he must pay her debts; and she owes sixteen thousand pounds. This obstacle thrown in the way, looks as if she was not sure of being duchess of Kingston. The lawyers say, it will be no valid plea; it not appearing that she was Hervey's wife, and therefore the tradesmen could not reckon on his paying them.

Yes, it is my Gray, Gray the poet, who is made professor of modern history; and I believe it is worth 500*l.* a year. I knew nothing of it till I saw it in the papers; but believe it was Stonehewer that obtained it for him.

Yes again; I use a bit of alum half as big as my nail, once or twice a week, and let it dissolve in my mouth. I should not think that using it oftener could be prejudicial. You should inquire; but as you are in more

[†] Thomas Secker, archbishop of Canterbury.

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hurry than I am, you should certainly use it oftener than I do. I wish I could cure my lady A—— too. Ice-water has astonishing effect on my stomach, and removes all pain like a charm. Pray, though the one's teeth may not be so white as formerly, nor t'other look in perfect health, let the Danish king see such good specimens of the last age—though, by what I hear, he likes nothing but the very present age.—However, sure you will both come and look at him: not that I believe he is a jot better than the apprentices that flirt to Epfom in a Tim-whisky; but I want to meet you in town.

I don't very well know what I write, for I hear a caravan on my stairs, that are come to see the house: Margaret is chattering, and the dogs barking; and this I call retirement! and yet I think it preferable to your visit at Becket. Adieu! Let me know something more of your motions, before you go to Ireland, which I think a strange journey, and better compounded for: and when I see you in town I will settle with you another visit to Park-place.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXVIII.

Strawberry-hill, Friday, July 7, 1769.

YOU desired me to write, if I knew any thing particular. How particular will content you? Don't imagine I would send you such hash as the livery's petition¹. Come; would the apparition of my lord Chatham satisfy you? Don't be frightened: it was not his ghost. He, he himself in propria persona, and not in a strait waistcoat, walked into the king's levee this morning, and was in the closet twenty minutes after the levee; and was to go out of town to-night again. The deuce is in it if this is not news. Whether he is to be king, minister, lord mayor, or alderman, I do not know; nor a word more than I have told you.

¹ The petition of the livery of London, complaining of the unconstitutional conduct of the king's ministers, and the undue return of Mr. Luttrell when he opposed Mr. Wilkes at the election for Middlesex. E.

Whether he was sent for to guard St. James's gate, or whether he came alone, like Almanzor, to storm it, I cannot tell: by Beckford's violence I should think the latter. I am so indifferent what he came for, that I shall wait till Sunday to learn; when I lie in town on my way to Ely. You will probably hear more from your brother before I can write again. I send this by my friend Mr. Granger¹, who will leave it at your park-gate as he goes through Henley home. Good-night: it is past twelve, and I am going to bed.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXIX.

Strawberry-hill, Tuesday Nov. 14, 1769.

I AM here quite alone, and did not think of going to town till Friday for the opera, which I have not yet seen. In compliment to you and your countess I will make an effort, and be there on Thursday; and will either dine with you at your own house, or at your brother's; which you choose. This is a great favour, and beyond my lord Temple's journey to dine with my lord mayor². I am so sick of the follies of all sides, that I am happy to be at quiet here, and to know no more of them than what I am forced to see in the newspapers; and those I skip over as fast as I can.

The account you give me of lady — was just the same as I received from Paris. I will show you a very particular letter I received by a private hand from thence; which convinces me that I guessed right, contrary to all the wise, that the journey to Fontainebleau would overfet monsieur de Choiseul. I think he holds but by a thread, which will snap soon. I am labouring hard with the duchess³ to procure the duke of Richmond satisfaction in the favour he has asked about his duchy⁴; but he shall not know

¹ Author of the Biographical History of England.

² In the second mayoralty of William Beckford.

³ The duchess of Choiseul.

⁴ Of Aubigné.

it till it is completed, if I can be so lucky as to succeed. I think I shall, if they do not fall immediately.

You perceive how barren I am, and why I have not written to you. I pass my time in clipping and pasting prints; and do not think I have read forty pages since I came to England. I bought a poem called Trincalo's Trip to the Jubilee; having been struck with two lines in an extract in the papers,

And the ear-piercing fife,
And the ear-piercing wife—

Alas! all the rest, and it is very long, is a heap of unintelligible nonsense, about Shakespeare, politics, and the lord knows what. I am grieved that, with our admiration of Shakespeare, we can do nothing but write worse than ever he did. One would think the age studied nothing but his Love's labour lost, and Titus Andronicus. Politics and abuse have totally corrupted our taste. Nobody thinks of writing a line that is to last beyond the next fortnight. We might as well be given up to controversial divinity. The times put me in mind of the Constantinopolitan empire; where, in an age of learning, the subtlest wits of Greece contrived to leave nothing behind them, but the memory of their follies and acrimony. Milton did not write his Paradise Lost till he had outlived his politics. With all his parts, and noble sentiments of liberty, who would remember him for his barbarous prose? Nothing is more true than that extremes meet. The licentiousness of the press makes us as savage as our Saxon ancestors, who could only set their marks; and an outrageous pursuit of individual independence, grounded on selfish views, extinguishes genius as much as despotism does. The public good of our country is never thought of by men that hate half their country. Heroes confine their ambition to be leaders of the mob. Orators seek applause from their faction, not from posterity; and ministers forget foreign enemies, to defend themselves against a majority in parliament. When any Cæsar has conquered Gaul, I will excuse him for aiming at the perpetual dictatorship. If he has only jockeyed somebody out of the borough of Veii or Falernum, it is too impudent to call himself a patriot or a statesman. Adieu!

LETTER

LETTER LXXX.

Arlington-street, July 12, 1770.

REPOSING under my laurels! No, no, I am reposing in a much better tent, under the tester of my own bed. I am not obliged to rise by break of day and be dressed for the drawing-room; I may saunter in my slippers till dinner-time, and not make bows till my back is as much out of joint as my lord Temple's. In short, I should die of the gout or fatigue, if I was to be Polonius to a princess for another week*. Twice a-day we made a pilgrimage to almost every heathen temple in that province that they call a garden; and there is no falling out of the house without descending a flight of steps as high as St. Paul's. My lord Belborough would have dragged me up to the top of the column, to see all the kingdoms of the earth; but I would not, if he could have given them to me. To crown all, because we live under the line, and that we were all of us giddy young creatures, of near threescore, we supped in a grotto in the Elysian fields, and were refreshed with rivers of dew and gentle showers that dripped from all the trees; and put us in mind of the heroic ages, when kings and queens were shepherds and shepherdesses, and lived in caves, and were wet to the skin two or three times a-day. Well! thank heaven, I am emerged from that Elysium, and once more in a christian country!—Not but, to say the truth, our pagan landlord and landlady were very obliging, and the party went off much better than I expected. We had no very recent politics, though volumes about the Spanish war; and as I took care to give every thing a ludicrous turn as much as I could, the princess was diverted, the six days rolled away, and the seventh is my sabbath; and I promise you I will do no manner of work, I, nor my cat, nor my dog, nor any thing that is mine. For this reason, I entreat that the journey to Goodwood may not take place before the 12th of August, when I will attend you. But this expedition to Stowe has quite blown up my intended one to Wentworth-castle: I have not resolution enough left for such a journey. Will you and lady A—— come to Strawberry before or after Goodwood? I know you like being dragged from home as little as I do; therefore you shall place that visit just when it is most convenient to you.

* Mr. Walpole had been for a week at Stowe, the seat of earl Temple, with a party invited to meet her royal highness the late princess Amelia.

I came

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I came to town the night before last, and am just returning. There are not twenty people in all London. Are not you in despair about the summer? It is horrid to be ruined in coals in June and July. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXXI.

Arlington-street, Christmas-day.

IF poplar-pines ever grow¹, it must be in such a soaking season as this. I wish you would send half-a-dozen by some Henley barge to meet me next Saturday at Strawberry-hill, that they may be as tall as the monument by next summer. My cascades give themselves the airs of cataracts, and Mrs. Clive looks like the sun rising out of the ocean. Poor Mr. Raftor² is tired to death of their solitude; and as his passion is walking, he talks with rapture of the brave rows of lamps all along the streets, just as I used formerly to think no trees beautiful without lamps to them, like those at Vauxhall.

As I came to town but to dinner, and have not seen a soul, I do not know whether there is any news. I am just going to the princess³, where I shall hear all there is. I went to king Arthur on Saturday, and was tired to death, both of the nonsense of the piece and the execrable performance, the fingers being still worse than the actors. The scenes are little better (though Garrick boasts of rivalling the French opera), except a pretty bridge, and a gothic church with windows of painted glass. This scene, which should be a barbarous temple of Woden, is a perfect cathedral, and the devil officiates at a kind of high mass! I never saw greater absurdities.

Adieu!

¹ The first poplar-pine (or, as they have since been called, Lombardy poplar) planted in England is that at Park-place, on the bank of the river near the great arch. It was a cutting brought from Turin by the late lord Rochford in his carriage, and planted by general Conway's own hand. E.

² Brother to Mrs. Clive. He had been an actor himself, and, when his sister retired from the stage, lived with her in the house Mr. Walpole had given her at Twickenham. E.

³ The late princess Amelia.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXII.

Arlington-street, Dec. 29, 1770.

THE trees¹ came safe: I thank you for them: they are gone to Strawberry, and I am going to plant them. This paragraph would not call for a letter, but I have news for you of importance enough to dignify a dispatch. The duc de Choiseul is fallen! The express from lord Harcourt² arrived yesterday morning; the event happened last Monday night, and the courier set out so immediately, that not many particulars are yet known. The duke was allowed but three hours to prepare himself, and ordered to retire to his seat at Chanteloup: but some letters say, Il ira plus loin. The duc de Praslin is banished too, and Chatelet is forbidden to visit Choiseul. Chatelet was to have had the marine; and I am sure is no loss to us. The chevalier de Muy is made secretary of state pour la guerre; and it is concluded that the duc d'Aiguillon is prime-minister, but was not named so in the first hurry. There! there is a revolution! there is a new scene opened! Will it advance the war? Will it make peace? These are the questions all mankind is asking. This whale has swallowed up all gudgeon-questions. Lord Harcourt writes, that the d'Aiguillonists had officiously taken opportunities of assuring him, that if they prevailed it would be peace; but in this country we know that opponents turned ministers *can* change their language. It is added, that the morning of Choiseul's banishment, the king said to him, Monsieur, je vous ai dit que je ne voulois pas la guerre. Yet how does this agree with Francès's³ eager protestations that Choiseul's fate depended on preserving the peace? How does it agree with the comptroller-general's offer of finding funds for the war, and of Choiseul's proving he could not?—But how reconcile half the politics one hears? De Guisnes and Francès sent their excuses to the duchess of Argyll last night; and I suppose the Spaniards too, for none of them were there.—Well! I shall let all this bustle cool for two days; for what Englishman does not sacrifice any thing to go his Saturday out of town?—And yet I am very much interested in this event; I feel much for madame de Choiseul, though nothing

¹ The Lombardy poplars.² Then ambassador at Paris.³ Then the chargé des affaires from the French court in London.

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for her *Corfican* husband; but I am in the utmost anxiety for my dear old friend¹, who passed every evening with the duchess, and was thence in great credit; and what is worse, though nobody I think can be savage enough to take away her pension, she may find great difficulty to get it paid—and then her poor heart is so good and warm, that this blow on her friends, at her great age, may kill her. I have had no letter, nor had last post—whether it was stopped, or whether she apprehended the event, as I imagine—for every body observed, on Tuesday night, at your brother's, that Francès could not open his mouth. In short, I am most seriously alarmed about her.

You have seen in the papers the designed arrangements in the law. They now say there is some hitch; but I suppose it turns on some demands, and so will be got over by their being granted.

Mr. Mason, the bard, gave me yesterday the inclosed memorial, and begged I would recommend it to you. It is in favour of a very ingenious painter. Adieu! the sun shines brightly; but it is one o'clock, and it will be set before I get to Twickenham.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXXIII.

Paris, July 30, 1771.

I DO not know where you are, nor where this will find you, nor when it will set out to seek you, as I am not certain by whom I shall send it. It is of little consequence, as I have nothing material to tell you, but what you probably may have heard.

The distress here is incredible, especially at court. The king's tradesmen are ruined, his servants starving, and even angels and archangels

¹ Madame la marquise du Deffand.

cannot

cannot get their pensions and salaries, but sing Woe! woe! woe! instead of Hosannahs. Compiègne is abandoned; Villiers-coterets and Chantilly¹ crowded, and Chanteloup² still more in fashion, whither every body goes that pleases; though, when they ask leave, the answer is, *Je ne le defends ni le permets*. This is the first time that ever the will of a king of France was interpreted against his inclination. Yet, after annihilating his parliament, and ruining public credit, he tamely submits to be affronted by his own servants. Mad. de Beauveau and two or three high-spirited dames defy this czar of Gaul. Yet they and their cabal are as inconsistent on the other hand. They make epigrams, sing vaudevilles against the mistress, hand about libels against the chancellor, and have no more effect than a sky-rocket; but in three months will die to go to court, and to be invited to sup with madame du Barry. The only real struggle is between the chancellor³ and the duc d'Aiguillon. The first is false, bold, determined, and not subject to little qualms. The other is less known, communicates himself to nobody, is suspected of deep policy and deep designs, but seems to intend to set out under a mask of very smooth varnish; for he has just obtained the payment of all his bitter enemy la Chalotais's pensions and arrears. He has the advantage too of being but moderately detested in comparison of his rival, and, what he values more, the interest of the mistress⁴. The comptroller-general⁵ serves both, by acting mischief more sensibly felt; for he ruins every body but those who purchase a respite from his mistress. He dispenses bankruptcy by retail, and will fall, because he cannot even by these means be useful enough. They are striking off nine millions from la caisse militaire, five from the marine, and one from the affaires étrangères: yet all this will not extricate them. You never saw a great nation in so disgraceful a position. Their next prospect is not better: it rests on an Imbecille, both in mind and body.

July 31.

Mr. Churchill and my sister set out to-night after supper, and I shall send this letter by them. There are no new books, no new plays, no new novels;

¹ The country palaces of the duke of Orleans and the prince of Condé, who were in disgrace at court for having espoused the cause of the parliament of Paris banished by the chancellor Maupou.

² The country seat of the duc de Choiseul, to

which, on his ceasing to be first minister, he was banished by the king.

³ Maupou.

⁴ Madame du Barry.

⁵ The abbé Terrai.

may, no new fashions. They have dragged old m^{lle} le Maure out of a retreat of thirty years, to sing at the Colisée, which is a most gaudy Ranelagh, gilt, painted, and be-cupided like an opera, but not calculated to last as long as Mother Coliseum, being composed of chalk and pasteboard. Round it are courts of treillage, that serve for nothing, and behind it a canal, very like a horse-pond, on which there are fireworks and juffs. All together it is very pretty; but as there are few nabobs and nabobesses in this country, and as the middling and common people are not much richer than Job when he had lost every thing but his patience, the proprietors are on the point of being ruined, unless the project takes place that is talked of. It is, to oblige Corneille, Racine, and Moliere to hold their tongues twice a-week, that their audiences may go to the Colisée. This is like our parliament's adjourning when senators want to go to Newmarket. There is a monsieur Guillard writing a history of the rivalité de la France et de l'Angleterre.—I hope he will not omit this parallel.

The instance of their poverty that strikes *me* most, who make political observations by the thermometer of baubles, is, that there is nothing new in their shops. I know the faces of every snuff-box and every tea-cup as well as those of madame du Lac and monsieur Poirier. I have chosen some cups and saucers for my lady A——, as she ordered me, but I cannot say they are at all extraordinary. I have bespoken two cabriolets for her, instead of six, because I think them very dear, and that she may have four more if she likes them. I shall bring too a sample of a baguette that suits them. For myself, between economy and the want of novelty, I have not laid out five guineas—a very memorable anecdote in the history of my life. Indeed, the czarina and I have a little dispute: she has offered to purchase the whole Crozat collection of pictures, at which I had intended to ruin myself. The Turks take her for it!—A-propos, they are sending from hence fourscore officers to Poland, each of whom I suppose, like Almanzor, can stamp with his foot and raise an army.

As my sister travels like a Tartar princess with her whole horde, she will arrive too late almost for me to hear from you in return to this letter, which in truth requires no answer, vû que I shall set out myself on the 26th of August. You will not imagine that I am glad to save myself the pleasure of hearing from you, but I would not give you the trouble of writing

writing unnecessarily. If you are at home, and not in Scotland, you will judge by these dates where to find me. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. Instead of restoring the Jesuits, they are proceeding to annihilate the Celestine, Augustines, and some other orders.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Paris, Aug. 11, 1771.

YOU will have seen, I hope, before now, that I have not neglected writing to you. I sent you a letter by my sister, but doubt she has been a great while upon the road, as they travel with a large family. I was not sure where you was, and would not write at random by the post.

I was just going out when I received yours and the newspapers. I was struck in a most sensible manner, when, after reading your letter, I saw in the newspapers that Gray^a is dead! So very ancient an intimacy, and, I suppose, the natural reflection to self on losing a person but a year older, made me absolutely start in my chair. It seemed more a corporal than a mental blow; and yet I am exceedingly concerned for him, and every body must be so for the loss of such a genius. He called on me but two or three days before I came hither; he complained of being ill, and talked of the gout in his stomach—but I expected his death no more than my own—and yet the same death will probably be mine.—I am full of all these reflections—but shall not attrist you with them:—only do not wonder that my letter will be short, when my mind is full of what I do not give vent to. It was but last night that I was thinking how few persons last, if one lives to be old, to whom one can talk without reserve. It is impossible to be intimate with the young, because they and the old cannot converse on the same common topics; and of the old that survive, there are few one can commence a friendship with, because one has probably all one's life despised their

^a Thomas Gray, the poet.

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hearts or their understandings. These are the steps through which one passes to the unenviable lees of life!

I am very sorry for the state of poor lady B——. It presages ill. She had a prospect of long happiness. Opium is a very false friend.

I will get you Bougainville's book.—I think it is on the Falkland Isles, for it cannot be on those just discovered; but as I set out to-morrow se'nnight, and probably may have no opportunity sooner of sending it, I will bring it myself. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXXV.

Arlington-street, September 7, 1771.

I ARRIVED yesterday within an hour or two after you was gone, which mortified me exceedingly; lord knows when I shall see you. You are so active and so busy, and cast bullets and build bridges, are pontifex maximus, and, like sir John Thorold or Cimon,

triumph over land and wave, that one can never get a word with you. Yet I am very well worth a general's or a politician's ear. I have been deep in all the secrets of France, and confidant of some of the principals of both parties. I know what is, and is to be, though I am neither priest nor conjurer—and have heard a vast deal about breaking carabiniers and grenadiers; though, as

Mr. Conway was now at the head of the ordnance, on lord Granby's resignation, to Mr. Conway, who is only lieutenant-general of it. He said he had lived in friendship with lord Granby, and would not profit by his spoils: but as he thought he could do some essential service in the office, where there are many abuses; if his majesty would be pleased to let him continue as he is, he would do the business of the office

January, 1770.

"The king offered the mastership of the without accepting the salary."

usual,

usual, I dare to say I shall give a woful account of both. The worst part is, that by the most horrid oppression and injustice their finances will very soon be in good order—unless some bankrupt turns Ravaillac, which will not surprize me. The horror the nation has conceived of the king and chancellor, makes it probable that the latter, at least, will be sacrificed. He seems not to be without apprehension, and has removed from the king's library a MS. trial of a chancellor who was condemned to be hanged under Charles VII.—For the king, qui a fait ses épreuves, and not to his honour, you will not wonder that he lives in terrors.

I have executed all lady A——'s commissions; but mind, I do not commission you to tell her, for you would certainly forget it.

As you will no doubt come to town to report who burnt Portsmouth, I will meet you here, if I am apprised of the day. Your niece's marriage pleases me extremely. Though I never saw him till last night, I know a great deal of her futur, and like his character. His person is much better than I expected, and far preferable to many of the fine young moderns. He is better than fir —, at least as well as the duke of —, and Adonis compared to the charming Mr. —. Adieu!

L E T T E R LXXXVI.

Late Strawberry-hill, January 7, 1772.

YOU have read of my calamity without knowing it, and will pity me when you do. I have been blown up; my castle is blown up; Guy Fawkes has been about my house; and the fifth of November has fallen on the 6th of January! In short, nine thousand powder-mills broke loose yesterday morning on Hounslow-heath; a whole squadron of them came hither, and have broken eight of my painted-glass windows: and the north side of the castle looks as if it had stood a siege. The two saints in the hall have suffered martyrdom! they have had their bodies cut off, and nothing remains but their heads. The two next great sufferers are indeed two of

‡ The marriage of lady Gertrude Seymour Conway to lord Villiers, since earl of Grandison.

the

the least valuable, being the passage windows to the library and great parlour—a fine pane is demolished in the round room; and the window by the gallery is damaged. Those in the cabinet and Holbein-room, and gallery, and blue-room, and green-closet, &c. have escaped. As the storm came from the north-west, the china-closet was not touched, nor a cup fell down. The bow-window of brave old coloured glass, at Mr. Hindley's, is massacred; and all the north sides of Twickenham and Brentford are shattered. At London it was proclaimed an earthquake, and half the inhabitants ran into the street.

As lieutenant-general of the ordnance, I must beseech you to give strict orders that no more powder-mills may blow up. My aunt, Mrs. Kerwood, reading one day in the papers that a distiller's had been burnt by the head of the still flying off, said, she wondered they did not make an act of parliament against the heads of stills flying off. Now, I hold it much easier for you to do a body this service; and would recommend to your consideration, whether it would not be prudent to have all magazines of powder kept under water till they are wanted for service. In the mean time, I expect a pension to make me amends for what I have suffered under the government. Adieu!

Yours, all that remains of me,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R LXXXVII.

Strawberry-hill, Monday June 22, 1772.

IT is lucky that I have had no dealings with Mr. F——; for, if he had ruined me, as he has half the world, I could not have *run* away. I tired myself with walking on Friday; the gout came on Saturday in my foot; yesterday I kept my bed till four o'clock, and my room all day—but, with wrapping myself all over with bootikins, I have scarce had any pain—my foot swelled immediately, and to-day I am descended into the blueth and green¹; and though you expect to find that I am paving the way to an

¹ Cant words of Mr. Walpole's for blue and green. He means, that he came out of his room to the blue sky and green fields. E.

excuse, I think I shall be able to be with you on Saturday. All I intend to excuse myself from, is walking. I should certainly never have the gout, if I had lost the use of my feet. Cherubims that have no legs, and do nothing but stick their chins in a cloud and sing, are never out of order. Exercise is the worst thing in the world, and as bad an invention as gunpowder.

A-propos to Mr. F——, here is a passage ridiculously applicable to him, that I met with yesterday in the letters of Guy Patin: "Il n'y a pas long tems qu'un auditeur des comptes nommé mons. Nivelles fit banqueroute; et tout fraichement, c'est-à-dire depuis trois jours, un tresorier des parties casuelles, nommé Sanson, en a fait autant; et pour vous montrer, qu'il est vrai que *res humanæ faciunt circulum*, comme il a été autrefois dit par Plato et par Aristote, celui-là s'en retourne d'où il vient. Il est fils d'un païsan; il a été laquais de son premier metier, et aujourd'hui il n'est plus rien, si non qu'il lui reste une assez belle femme."——I do not think I can find in Patin or Plato, nay, nor in Aristotle, though he wrote about every thing, a parallel case to ——'s: there are advertised to be sold more annuities of his and his society, to the amount of five hundred thousand pounds a year! I wonder what he will do next, when he has sold the estates of all his friends!

I have been reading the most delightful book in the world, the lives of Leland, Tom Hearne, and Antony Wood. The last's diary makes a thick volume in octavo. One entry is, "This day Old Joan began to make my bed." In the story of Leland is an examination of a free mason, written by the hand of king Henry VI. with notes by Mr. Locke. Free-masonry, Henry VI. and Locke, make a strange heterogeneous olio; but that is not all. The respondent, who defends the mystery of masonry, says it was brought into Europe by the Venetians—he means the Phenicians—And who do you think propagated it? Why, one Peter Gore—And who do you think that was?—One Pythagoras, Pythagore.—I do not know whether it is not still more extraordinary, that this and the rest of the nonsense in that account made Mr. Locke determine to be a free-mason: so would I too, if I could expect to hear of more *Peter Gores*.

Pray tell lady Lyttelton that I say she will certainly kill herself if she
lets

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lets lady A—— drag her twice a day to feed the pheasants; and you make her climb cliffs and clamber over mountains. She has a tractability that alarms me for her; and if she does not pluck up a spirit and determine never to be put out of her own way, I do not know what may be the consequence. I will come and set her an example of immoveability. Take notice, I do not say one civil syllable to lady A——. She has not passed a whole day here these two years. She is always very gracious, says she will come when *you* will fix a time, as if *you* governed, and then puts it off whenever it is proposed, nor will spare one single day from Park-place—as if other people were not as partial to their own Park-places! Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Tuesday noon.

I WROTE my letter last night; this morning I received yours, and shall wait till Sunday, as you bid me, which will be more convenient for my gout, though not for other engagements; but I shall obey the superior, as *nullum tempus occurrit regi et podagræ*.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Arlington-street, August 30, 1773.

I RETURNED last night from Houghton¹, where multiplicity of business detained me four days longer than I intended, and where I found a scene infinitely more mortifying than I expected; though I certainly did not go with a prospect of finding a land flowing with milk and honey. Except the pictures, which are in the finest preservation, and the woods, which are become forests, all the rest is ruin, desolation, confusion, disorder, debts, mortgages, sales, pillage, villainy, waste, folly, and madness. I do not believe that five thousand pounds would put the house and buildings into good repair. The nettles and brambles in the park are up to your shoulders; horses have been turned into the garden, and banditti lodged in every cor-

¹ Where he had gone during the insanity of his nephew George earl of Orford, to endeavour to settle and arrange his affairs.

tage. The perpetuity of livings that come up to the park-pales have been sold—and every farm let for half its value. In short, you know how much family-pride I have—and consequently may judge how much I have been mortified!—Nor do I tell you half, or *near* the worst circumstances. I have just stopped the torrent—and that is all. I am very uncertain whether I must not fling up the trust; and some of the difficulties in my way seem unfurmountable, and too dangerous not to alarm even my zeal; since I must not ruin myself, and hurt those for whom I must feel too, only to restore a family that will end with myself, and to retrieve an estate, from which I am not likely ever to receive the least advantage.

If you will settle with the C.—s your journey to Chalfont, and will let me know the day, I will endeavour to meet you there; I hope it will not be till next week. I am overwhelmed with business—but indeed I know not when I shall be otherwise! I wish you joy of this endless summer.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Strawberry-hill, June 23, 1774.

I HAVE nothing to say—which is the best reason in the world for writing; for one must have a great regard for any body one writes to, when one begins a letter neither on ceremony nor business. You are seeing armies¹, who are always in fine order and great spirits when they are in cold blood: I am sorry you thought it worth while to realise what I should have thought you could have seen in your mind's eye. However, I hope you will be amused and pleased with viewing heroes, both in their autumn and their bud. Vienna will be a new sight; so will the Austrian eagle and its two heads. I should like *seeing* too, if any fairy would present me with a chest that would fly up into the air by touching a peg, and transport me whither I pleased in an instant: but roads, and inns, and dirt are terrible drawbacks on my curiosity. I grow so old, or so indolent, that I scarce stir from hence; and the dread of the gout makes me almost as much a prisoner, as a

¹ Mr. Conway was now on a tour of military curiosity through Flanders, Germany, Prussia, and part of Hungary.

fit of it. News I know none, if there is any. The papers tell me the city was to present a petition to the king against the Quebec-bill yesterday; and I suppose they will tell me to-morrow whether it was presented. The king's speech tells me, there has nothing happened between the Russians and the Turks. Lady Barrymore told me t'other day, that nothing was to happen between her and lord E——. I am as well satisfied with these negatives, as I should have been with the contrary. I am much more interested about the rain, for it destroys all my roses and orange-flowers, of which I have exuberance; and my hay is cut, and cannot be made. However, it is delightful to have no other distresses. When I compare my present tranquillity and indifference with all I suffered last year*, I am thankful for my happiness, and enjoy it—unless the bell rings at the gate early in the morning—and then I tremble, and think it an express from Norfolk.

It is unfortunate, that when one has nothing to talk of but one's self, one should have nothing to say of one's self. It is shameful too to send such a scrap by the post. I think I shall reserve it till Tuesday. If I have then nothing to add, as is probable, you must content yourself with my good intentions, as I hope you will with this speculative campaign. Pray, for the future remain at home and build bridges: I wish you were here to expedite ours to Richmond, which they tell me will not be passable these two years. I have done looking so forward. Adieu!

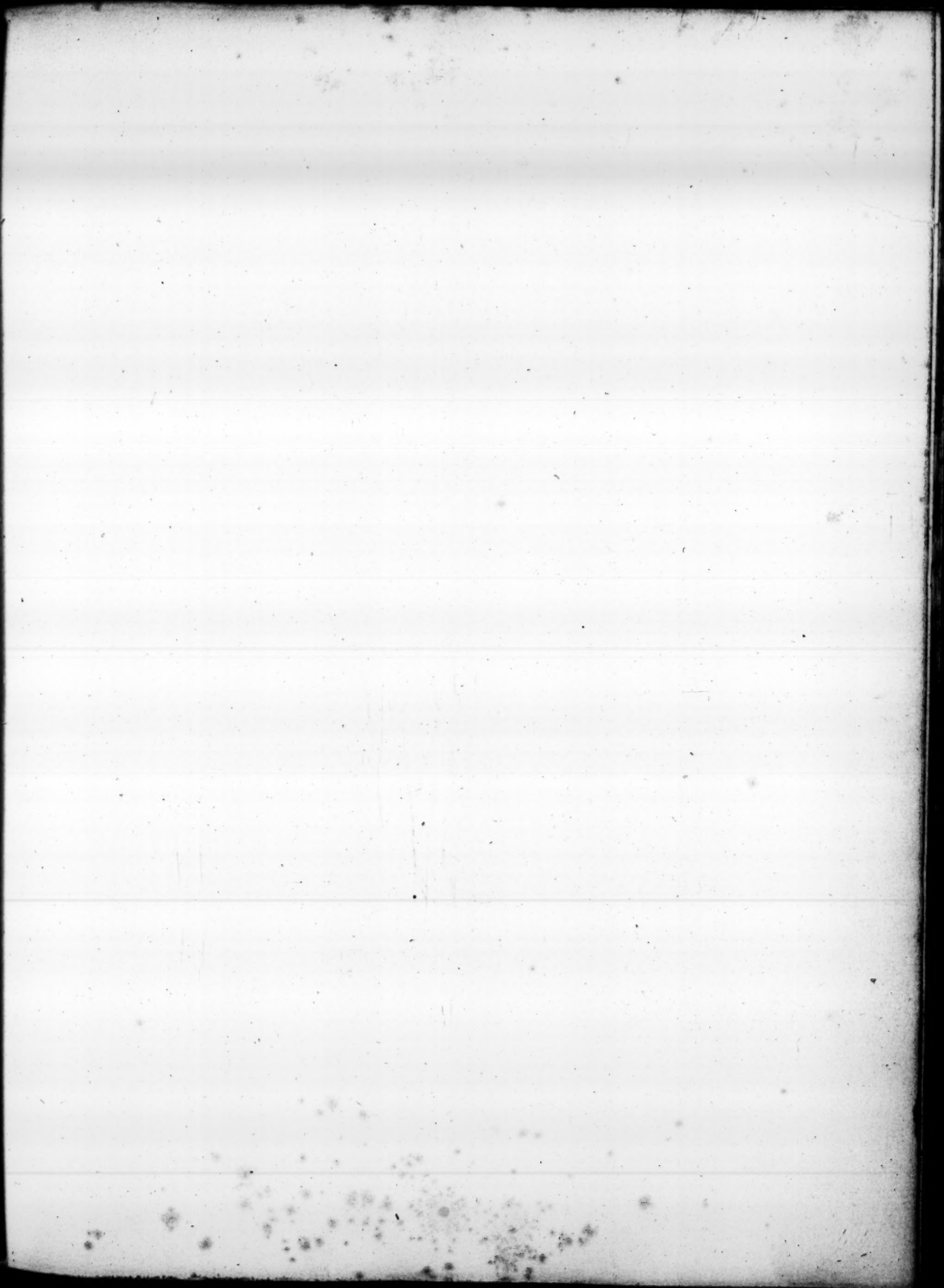
LETTER XC:

Strawberry-hill, August 18, 1774.

IT is very hard, that because you do not get my letters, you will not let me receive yours, who do receive them. I have not had a line from you these five weeks. Of your honours and glories Fame has told me²; and for aught I know, you may be a *veldt-marshal* by this time, and despise such a poor cottager as me. Take notice, I shall disclaim you in my turn, if you

* During the illness of his nephew lord Orford.

² Alluding to the distinguished notice taken of general Conway by the king of Prussia.





M.^{rs} Selwyn.

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are sent on a command against Dantzick, or to usurp a new district in Poland.

I have seen no armies, kings or empresses, and cannot send you such august gazettes; nor are they what I want to hear of. I like to hear you are well and diverted; nay, have pipped towards the latter, by desiring lady Ailesbury to send you monsieur de Guisnes's invitation to a military fête at Metz¹. For my part, I wish you was returned to your plough. Your Sabine farm² is in high beauty. I have lain there twice within this week, going to and from a visit to George Selwyn near Gloucester: a tour as much to my taste as yours to you. For fortified towns I have seen ruined castles. Unluckily, in that of Berkeley I found a whole regiment of militia in garrison, and as many young officers as if ———— was in possession, and ready to surrender at indiscretion. I endeavoured to comfort myself by figuring that they were guarding Edward II. I have seen many other ancient fights without asking leave of the king of Prussia: it would not please me so much to write to him, as it once did to write for him³.

They have found at least seventy thousand pounds of lord Thomond's⁴. George Howard has decked himself with a red ribband, money and honours! —Charming things! and yet one may be very happy without them.

The young — — is returned from his travels in love with the pretender's queen, who has permitted him to have her picture. What can I tell you more? Nothing. Indeed, if I only write to postmasters, my letter is long enough. Every body's head but mine is full of elections. I had the satisfaction at Gloucester, where G. Selwyn is canvassing, of reflecting on my own wisdom: *Suave mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis, &c.* I am certainly the greatest philosopher in the world, without ever having thought of being so: always employed, and never busy; eager about trifles, and indifferent to every thing serious. Well, if it is not philosophy, at least it is content. I

¹ To see the review of the French regiment of carabineers, then commanded by monsieur de Guisnes.

² Park-place.

³ Alluding to the letter to Rousseau in the name of the king of Prussia.

⁴ Percy Wyndham O'Brien. He was the second son of sir Charles Wyndham, the chancellor of the exchequer to queen Anne, and took the name of O'Brien pursuant to the will of his uncle the earl of Thomond in Ireland.

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am as pleased here with my own nutshell, as any monarch you have seen these two months astride his eagle—not but I was dissatisfied when I missed you at Park-place, and was peevish at your being in an Aulic chamber. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. They tell us from Vienna that the peace is made between Tisiphone and the Turk: Is it true?

LETTER XCI.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 7, 1774.

I DID not think you had been so like the rest of the world, as, when you pretended to be visiting armies, to go in search of gold and silver mines^a! The favours of courts and the smiles of emperors and kings, I see, have corrupted even you, and perverted you to a nabob. Have you brought away an ingot in the calf of your leg? What abomination have you committed? All the gazettes in Europe have sent you on different negotiations: instead of returning with a treaty in your pocket, you will only come back with bills of exchange. I don't envy your subterraneous travels, nor the hospitality of the Hungarians. Where did you find a spoonful of Latin about you? I have not attempted to speak Latin these thirty years, without perceiving I was talking Italian thickened with terminations in *us* and *orum*. I should have as little expected to find an Ovid in those regions; but I suppose the gentry of Presbourg read him for a fashionable author, as our 'squires and their wives do the last collections of ballads that have been sung at Vauxhall and Marybone. I wish you may have brought away some sketches of duke Albert's architecture. You know I deal in the works of royal authors, though I have never admired any of their own buildings, not excepting King Solomon's temple. Stanley^b and Edmondson in Hungary! What carried them thither? The chase of mines too? The first, perhaps,

^a Mr. Conway had gone to see the gold and silver mines of Cremnitz in the neighbourhood of Grau in Hungary.

^b Mr. Hans Stanley.

waddled

waddled thither obliquely, as a parrot would have done whose direction was to Naples.

Well, I am glad you have been entertained, and seen such a variety of sights. You don't mind fatigues and hardships, and hospitality, the two extremes that to me poison travelling. I shall never see any thing more, unless I meet with a ring that renders one invisible. It was but the other day, that, being with George Selwyn at Gloucester, I went to view Berkeley castle, knowing the earl was to dine with the mayor of Gloucester. Alas! when I arrived, he had put off the party to enjoy his militia a day longer, and the house was full of officers. They might be in the Hungarian dress, for aught I knew; for I was so dismayed, that I would fain have persuaded the housekeeper that she could not shew me the apartments; and when she opened the hall, and I saw it full of captains, I hid myself in a dark passage, and nothing could persuade me to enter, till they had the civility to quit the place. When I was forced at last to go over the castle, I ran through it without seeing any thing, as if I had been afraid of being detained prisoner.

I have no news to send you: if I had any, I would not conclude, as all correspondents do, that lady A. left nothing untold. Lady P. is gone to hold mobs at Ludlow, where there is actual war, and where a *knight*, I forget his name, one of their friends, has been *almost cut in two* with a scythe. When you have seen all the other armies in Europe, you will be just in time for many election-battles—perhaps for a war in America, whither more troops are going. Many of those already sent have deserted; and to be sure the prospect there is not smiling. A-propos, lord M. whom lord S. his father will not suffer to wear powder because wheat is so dear, was presented t'other day in coal black hair and a white feather: they said *he had been tarred and feathered*.

In France you will find a new scene¹. The chancellor is sent, a little before his time, to the devil. The old parliament is expected back. I am sorry to say I shall not meet you there. It will be too late in the year for me to venture, especially as I now live in dread of my biennial gout, and should die of it in a hotel garni, and forced to receive all comers—I, who you know lock myself up when I am ill, as if I had the plague.

¹ Upon the death of Louis XV.

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I wish I could fill my sheet, in return for your five pages. The only thing you will care for knowing is, that I never saw Mrs. D. better in her life, nor look so well. You may trust me, who am so apt to be frightened about her.

LETTER XCII.

Strawberry-hill, September 27, 1774.

I SHOULD be very ungrateful indeed if I thought of complaining of you, who are goodness itself to me: and when I did not receive letters from you, I concluded it happened from your eccentric positions. I am amazed, that, hurried as you have been, and your eyes and thoughts crowded with objects, you have been able to find time to write me so many and such long letters, over and above all those to lady A——, your daughter, brother, and other friends. Even lord Strafford brags of your frequent remembrance. That your superabundance of royal beams would dazzle you, I never suspected. Even I enjoy for you the distinctions you have received—though I should hate such things for myself, as they are particularly troublesome to me, and I am particularly awkward under them, and as I abhor the king of Prussia, and, if I passed through Berlin, should have no joy like avoiding him—like one of our countrymen, who changed horses at Paris, and asked what the name of that town was? All the other civilities you have received I am perfectly happy in. The Germans are certainly a civil well-meaning people, and I believe one of the least corrupted nations in Europe. I don't think them very agreeable; but who do I think are so? A great many French women, some English men, and a few English women—exceedingly few French men. Italian women are the grossest, vulgarest of the sex. If an Italian man has a grain of sense, he is a buffoon—So much for Europe.

I have already told you, and so must lady A——, that my courage fails me, and I dare not meet you at Paris. As the period is arrived when the gout used to come, it is never a moment out of my head. Such a suffering, such a helpless condition as I was in for five months and a half two years ago, makes me tremble from head to foot. I should die at once if seized in a French inn; or what, if possible, would be worse, at Paris, where I must admit every body.—I, who you know can hardly bear to see even you
when

when I am ill, and who shut myself up here, and would not let lord and lady Hertford come near me—I, who have my room washed though in bed, how could I bear French dirt? In short, I, who am so capricious, and whom you are pleased to call a philosopher, I suppose because I have given up every thing but my own will—how could I keep my temper, who have no way of keeping my temper but by keeping it out of every body's way! No, I must give up the satisfaction of being with you at Paris. I have just learnt to give up my pleasures, but I cannot give up my pains, which such selfish people as I, who have suffered much, grow to compose into a system, that they are partial to because it is their own. I must make myself amends when you return; you will be more stationary, I hope, for the future; and if I live I shall have intervals of health. In lieu of me you will have a charming succedaneum, lady — —. Her father, who is more a hero than I, is packing up his decrepit bones, and goes too. I wish she may not have him to nurse, instead of diverting herself.

The present state of your country is, that it is drowned and dead drunk; all water without and wine within. Opposition for the next elections every where, even in Scotland; not from party, but as laying out money to advantage. In the head quarters, indeed, party is not out of the question: the day after to-morrow will be a great bustle in the city for a lord mayor, and all the winter in Westminster, where lord Mahon and Humphrey Cotes oppose the court. Lady — is saving her money at Ludlow and Bowis castles by keeping open-house day and night against sir Watkin Williams, and fears she shall be kept there till the general election. It has rained this whole month, and we have got another inundation. The Thames is as broad as your Danube, and all my meadows are under water. Lady Browne and I, coming last Sunday night from lady Blandford's, were in a piteous plight. The ferry-boat was turned round by the current, and carried to Isleworth. Then we ran against the piers of our new bridge, and the horses were frightened. Luckily my cicisbea was a catholic, and screamed to so many saints, that some of them at the nearest alehouse came and saved us, or I should have had no more gout, or what I dreaded I should; for I concluded we should be carried ashore somewhere, and be forced to wade through the mud up to my middle. So you see one may wrap one's self

* When Mr. Wilkes was elected.

up in flannel and be in danger, without visiting all the armies on the face of the globe, and putting the immortality of one's chaise to the proof.

I am ashamed of sending you but three sides of smaller paper in answer to seven large—but what can I do? I see nothing, know nothing, do nothing. My castle is finished, I have nothing new to read, I am tired of writing, I have no new or old bit for my printer. I have only black hoods around me; or, if I go to town, the family-party in Grosvenor-street. One trait will give you a sample of how I pass my time, and made me laugh, as it put me in mind of you, at least as it was a fit of absence, much more likely to have happened to you than to me. I was playing at eighteenpenny tredrille with the duchess of Newcastle and lady Browne, and certainly not much interested in the game. I cannot recollect nor conceive what I was thinking of, but I pushed the cards very gravely to the duchess, and said, *Doctor*, you are to deal. You may guess at their astonishment, and how much it made us all laugh. I wish it may make you smile a moment, or that I had any thing better to send you, Adieu, most affectionately.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XCIII.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 28, 1774.

LADY Ailesbury brings you this¹, which is not a letter, but a paper of directions, and the counterpart of what I have written to madame du Deffand. I beg of you seriously to take a great deal of notice of this dear old friend of mine. She will perhaps expect more attention from you, as my friend, and as it is her own nature a little, than will be quite convenient to you: but you have an infinite deal of patience and good nature, and will excuse it. I was afraid of her importuning lady A——, who has a vast deal to see and do, and therefore I have prepared mad. du D.

¹ Mr. Conway ended his military tour at Paris, whither lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer went to meet him, and where they spent the winter together.

and

and told her lady A. loves amusements, and that, having never been at Paris before, she must not confine her: so you must pay for both—and it will answer: and I do not, I own, ask this only for madame du Deffand's sake, but for my own, and a little for yours. Since the late king's death she has not dared to write to me freely, and I want to know the present state of France exactly, both to satisfy my own curiosity, and for her sake, as I wish to learn whether her pension, &c. is in any danger from the present ministry, some of whom are not her friends. She can tell you a great deal if she will—by that I don't mean that she is reserved, or partial to her own country against ours—quite the contrary; she loves me better than all France together—but she hates politics; and therefore, to make her talk on it, you must tell her it is to satisfy me, and that I want to know whether she is well at court, whether she has any fears from the government, particularly from Maurepas and Nivernois; and that I am eager to have monsieur de Choiseul and *ma grandmaman* the duchess restored to power. If you take it on this foot easily, she will talk to you with the utmost frankness and with amazing cleverness. I have told her you are strangely absent, and that, if she does not repeat it over and over, you will forget every syllable: so I have prepared her to joke and be quite familiar with you at once. She knows more of personal characters, and paints them better than any body: but let this be between yourselves, for I would not have a living soul suspect that I get any intelligence from her, which would hurt her; and therefore I beg you not to let any human being know of this letter, nor of your conversations with her, neither English nor French.

Mad. du Deffand hates les philosophes, so you must give them up to her. She and madame Geoffrin are no friends: so, if you go thither, don't tell her of it. Indeed you would be sick of that house, whither all the pretended beaux esprits and faux sçavants go, and where they are very impertinent and dogmatic.

Let me give you one other caution, which I shall give lady A—— too. Take care of your papers at Paris, and have a very strong lock to your porte-feuille. In the hotels garnis they have double keys to every lock, and examine every drawer and paper of the English that they can get at. They will pilfer too whatever they can.—I was robbed of half my clothes

there the first time, and they wanted to hang poor Louis to save the people of the house who had stolen the things.

Here is another thing I must say. Mad. du Deffand has kept a great many of my letters, and, as she is very old, I am in pain about them. I have written to her to beg she will deliver them up to you to bring back to me, and I trust she will. If she does, be so good to take great care of them. If she does not mention them, tell her just before you come away, that I begged you to bring them; and if she hesitates, convince her how it would hurt me to have letters written in very bad French, and mentioning several people, both French and English, fall into bad hands, and, perhaps, be printed.

Let me desire you to read this letter more than once, that you may not forget my requests, which are very important to me; and I must give you one other caution, without which all would be useless. There is at Paris a m^{lle} de l'Espinasse, a pretended bel esprit, who was formerly an humble companion of mad. du Deffand; and betrayed her and used her very ill. I beg of you not to let any body carry you thither. It would disoblige my friend of all things in the world, and she would never tell you a syllable; and I own it would hurt me, who have such infinite obligations to her, that I should be very unhappy if a particular friend of mine showed her this disregard. She has done every thing upon earth to please and serve me, and I owe it to her to be earnest about this attention. Pray do not mention it: it might look simple in me, and yet I owe it to her, as I know it would hurt her: and at her age, with her misfortunes, and with infinite obligations on my side, can I do too much to show my gratitude, or prevent her any new mortification? I dwell upon it, because she has some enemies so spiteful that they try to carry all English to mad. de l'Espinasse.

I wish the duchess of Choiseul may come to Paris while you are there; but I fear she will not: you would like her of all things. She has more sense and more virtues than almost any human being. If you choose to see any of the savants, let me recommend monsieur Buffon. He has not only much more sense than any of them, but is an excellent old man, humane, gentle, well-bred, and with none of the arrogant pertness of all the rest. If he is at Paris, you will see a good deal of the comte de Broglie at mad. du Deffand's. He is not a genius of the first water, but lively and some-
times

times agreeable. The court, I fear, will be at Fontainebleau, which will prevent your seeing many, unless you go thither. Adieu! at Paris! I leave the rest of my paper for England, if I happen to have any thing particular to tell you.

L E T T E R XCIV.

Strawberry-hill, Sunday, October 16, 1774.

I RECEIVED this morning your letter of the 6th from Strasburg; and before you get this you will have had three from me by lady Ailesbury. One of them should have reached you much sooner; but lady A. kept it, not being sure where you was. It was in answer to one in which you told me an anecdote, which in this last you ask if I had received.

Your letters are always so welcome to me, that you certainly have no occasion for excusing what you say or do not say. Your details amuse me, and so would what you suppress; for, though I have no military genius or curiosity, whatever relates to yourself must interest me. The honours you have received, though I have so little taste for such things myself, gave me great satisfaction; and I do not know whether there is not more pleasure in *not* being a prophet in one's own country, when one is almost received like Mahomet in every other. To be an idol at home, is no assured touchstone of merit. Stocks and stones have been adored in fifty regions, but do not bear transplanting. The Apollo Belvedere and The Hercules Farnese may lose their temples, but never lose their estimation, by travelling.

Elections, you may be sure, are the only topic here at present—I mean in England—not on this quiet hill, where I think of them as little as of the spot where the battle of Blenheim was fought. They say there will not be much alteration, but the phoenix will rise from its ashes with most of its old plumes, or as bright. Wilkes at first seemed to carry all before him, besides having obtained the mayoralty of London at last. Lady H—— told me last Sunday, that he would carry twelve members. I have not been in town since, nor know any thing but what I collect from the papers; so, if my letter is opened, M. de Vergennes will not amass any very authentic intelligence from my *dispatches*.

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What I have taken notice of, is as follows: For the city Wilkes will have but three members: he will lose Crosby; and Townsend will carry Oliver. In Westminster, Wilkes will not have one; his Humphrey Cotes is by far the lowest on the poll; lord Percy and lord T. Clinton are triumphant there. Her grace of Northumberland sits at a window in Covent-garden, harangues the mob, and is "Hail, fellow, well met!" At Dover, Wilkes has carried one, and probably will come in for Middlesex himself with Glynn. There have been great endeavours to oppose him, but to no purpose.—Of this I am glad, for I do not love a mob so near as Brentford; especially as my road lies through it. Where he has any other interest I am too ignorant in these matters to tell you. Lord John Cavendish is opposed at York, and at the beginning of the poll had the fewest numbers. C—— F——, like the ghost in Hamlet, has shifted to many quarters; but in most the cock crew, and he walked off. In Southwark, there has been outrageous rioting; but I neither know the candidates, their connections, nor success. This, perhaps, will appear a great deal of news at Paris: here, I dare to say, my butcher knows more.

I can tell you still less of America. There are two or three more ships with forces going thither, and Sir William Draper as second in command.

Of private news, except that Dyson has had a stroke of palsy, and will die, there is certainly none; for I saw that shrill Morning Post, lady G——, two hours ago, and she did not know a paragraph.

I forgot to mention to you M. de Maurepas. He was by far the ablest and most agreeable man I knew at Paris: and if you stay, I think I could take the liberty of giving you a letter to him; though, as he is now so great a man, and I remain so little an one, I don't know whether it would be quite so proper—though he was exceedingly good to me, and pressed me often to make him a visit in the country.—But lord Stormont can certainly carry you to him—a better passport.

There was one of my letters on which I wish to hear from you. There are always English coming from Paris, who would bring such a parcel; at least you might send me one volume at a time, and the rest afterwards: but I should not care to have them ventured by the common conveyance. Mad. du Deffand is negotiating for an enamel picture for me; but if she obtains

obtains it, I had rather wait for it till you come. The books I mean, are those I told you lady A. and Mrs. D. would give you a particular account of, for they know my mind exactly. Don't reproach me with not meeting you at Paris. Recollect what I suffered this time two years; and if you can have any notion of fear, imagine my dread of torture for five months and a half! When all the quiet of Strawberry did but just carry me through it, could I support it in the noise of a French hotel! and, what would be still worse, exposed to receive all visits? for the French, you know, are never more in public than in the act of death. I am like animals, and love to hide myself *when I am dying*. Thank God, I am now two days beyond the crisis when I expected my dreadful periodic visitant, and begin to grow very sanguine about the virtue of the bootikins. I shall even have courage to go to-morrow to Chalfont for two days, as it is but a journey of two hours. I would not be a day's journey from hence for all lord Clive's diamonds. This will satisfy you. I doubt madame du Deffand is not so easily convinced: therefore pray do not drop a hint before her of blaming me for not meeting you; rather assure her you are persuaded it would have been too great a risk for me at this season. I wish to have her quite clear of my attachment to her; but that I do not always find so easy. You, I am sure, will find her all zeal and *empressement* for you and yours. Adieu!

L E T T E R XCV.

Strawberry-hill, October 29, 1774.

I HAVE received your letter of the 23d, and it certainly overpays me, when you thank instead of scolding me, as I feared. A passionate man has very little merit in being in a passion, and is sure of saying many things he repents, as I do. I only hope you think that I could not be so much in the wrong for every body; nor should have been perhaps even for you, if I had not been certain I was the only person, at that moment, that could serve you essentially: and at such a crisis, I am sure I should take exactly the same part again, except in saying some things I did, of which I am ashamed!

¹ This relates to Mr. Walpole having resented of a seat in parliament at the general election, in a very warm manner, some neglect on the which took place in the year 1774. E. part of his friends which deprived Mr. Conway

I will

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I will say no more now on that topic, nor on any thing relating to it, because I have written my mind very fully, and you will know it soon. I can only tell you now, that I approve extremely your way of thinking, and hope you will not change it before you hear from me, and know some material circumstances. You and lady A. and I agree exactly, and she and I certainly consider only *you*. I do not answer her last, because I could not help telling you how very kindly I take your letter. All I beg is, that you would have no delicacy about my serving you any way. You know it is a pleasure to me: any body else may have views that would embarrass you; and therefore, till you are on the spot, and can judge for yourself (which I always insist on, because you are cooler than I, and because, though I have no interests to serve, I have passions which equally mislead one), it will be wiser to decline all kind of proposals and offers. You will avoid the plague of contested elections and solicitations; and I see no reasons, at present, that can tempt you to be in a hurry.

You must not expect to be madame du Deffand's first favourite. Lady Ailesbury has made such a progress there, that you will not easily supplant her. I have received volumes in her praise. You have a better chance with madame de C——, who is very agreeable; and I hope you are not such an English husband as not to conform to the manners of Paris while you are there.

I forgot to mention one or two of my favourite objects to lady A. nay, I am not sure she will taste one of them, the church of the Celestines. It is crowded with beautiful old tombs: one of Francis II. whose beatitude is presumed from his being husband of the martyr Mary Stuart. Another is of the first wife of John duke of Bedford, the regent of France. I think you was once there with me formerly. The other is Richelieu's tomb, at the Sorbonne—but that every body is carried to see. The hotel de *Carnavalet*¹, near the Place royale, is worth looking at, even for the façade, as you drive by. But of all earthly things the most worth seeing is the house at Versailles, where the king's pictures, not hung up, are kept. There is a treasure past belief, though in sad order, and piled one against another. Monsieur de Guerchy once carried me thither; and you may

¹ Where madame de Sevigné resided.

certainly

certainly get leave. At the Luxembourg are some hung up, and one particularly is worth going to see alone: it is the Deluge by Nicolo Pouffin, as winter. The three other seasons are good for nothing—but the Deluge is the first picture in the world of its kind. You will be shocked to see the glorious pictures at the Palais royal transplanted to new canvasses, and new painted and varnished, as if they were to be scenes at the opera—at least, they had treated half a dozen of the best so, three years ago, and were going on. The prince of Monaco has a few fine, but still worse used; one of them shines more than a looking-glass. I fear the exposition of pictures is over for this year; it is generally very *diverting*¹. I, who went into every church of Paris, can assure you there are few worth it, but the Invalids—except the *scenery* at St. Roch, about one or two o'clock at noon, when the sun shines; the Carmelites, for the Guido and the portrait of madame de la Valiere as a Magdalen; the Val de Grace, for a moment; the *treasure* at Notre Dame; the Sainte Chapelle, where in the anti-chapel are two very large enamelled portraits; the tomb of Condé at the Great Jesuits in the rue St. Antoine, if not shut up; and the little church of St. Louis in the Louvre, where is a fine tomb of cardinal Fleury, but large enough to stand on Salisbury-plain. One thing some of you *must* remember, as you return; nay, it is better to go soon to St. Denis, and madame du Deffand must get you a particular order to be shown (which is never shewn without) the effigies of the kings. They are in presses over the treasure which is shown, and where is the glorious antique cameo-cup; but the countenance of Charles IX. is so horrid and remarkable, you would think he had died on the morrow of the St. Barthelemi, and waked full of the recollection. If you love enamels and exquisite medals, get to see the collection of a monsieur d'Henery, who lives in the corner of the street where sir John Lambert lives—I forget its name. There is an old man behind the rue de Colombier, who has a great but bad collection of old French portraits; I delighted in them, but perhaps you would not. I, you may be sure, hunted out every thing of that sort. The convent and collection of St. Germain, I mean that over against the hotel du Parc royal, is well worth seeing—but I forget names strangely.—Oh! delightful—lord Cholmondeley sends me word he goes to Paris on Monday: I shall send this and my other letter by him. It was him I meant; I knew he was going, and had prepared it.

¹ He means from their extreme bad taste.

Pray.

Pray take care to lock up your papers in a strong box that nobody can open. They imagine you are at Paris on some commission, and there is no trusting French hotels or servants. America is in a desperate situation. The accounts from the Congress are not expected before the 10th, and expected very warm. I have not time to tell you some manoeuvres against them that will make your blood curdle. Write to me when you can by private hands, as I will to you. There are always English passing backwards and forwards.

LETTER XCVI.

Strawberry-hill, November 12, 1774.

I HAVE received a delightful letter from you of four sheets, and another since. I shall not reply to the campaigning part (though much obliged to you for it), because I have twenty other subjects more pressing to talk of. The first is to thank you for your excessive goodness to my dear old friend—she has some indiscretions, and *you must not have any to her*; but she has the best heart in the world, and I am happy, at her great age, that she has spirits enough not to be always upon her guard. A bad heart, especially after long experience, is but too apt to overflow *inwardly* with prudence. At least, as I am but too like her, and have corrected too few of my faults, I would fain persuade myself that some of them flow from a good principle—but I have not time to talk of myself, though you are much too partial to me, and give me an opportunity; yet I shall not take it.

Now for English news, and then your letter again.

There has been a great mortality here; though death has rather been *pré* than a volunteer. —, as I told lady Ailesbury last post, shot himself. He is dead, totally undone. Whether that alone was the cause, or whether he had not done something worse, I doubt. I cannot conceive that, with his resources, he should have been hopeless—and to suspect him of delicacy, impossible!

A ship is arrived from America, and I doubt with very bad news, for none but trifling letters have yet been given out—but I am here, see nobody

that knows any thing, and only hear by accident from people that drop in. The floop that is to bring the result of the general assembly is not yet come. There are indeed rumours, that both the non-importation and even non-exportation have been decreed; and that the flame is universal. I hope this is exaggerated! yet I am told the stocks will fall very much in a day or two.

I have nothing to tell lady Ailesbury, but that I hear a deplorable account of the opera. There is a new puppet-show at Drury-lane, as fine as scenes can make it, called The Maid of the Oaks, and as dull as the author could not help making it¹.

Except M. D'Herouville I know all the people you name. C. I doubt by things I have heard formerly, may have been a *concuSSIONNAIRE*. The duke, your *protecteur*², is mediocre enough: you would have been more pleased with his wife. The chevalier's³ bon-mot is excellent, and so is he. He has as much bouffonnerie as the Italians, with more wit and novelty. His impromptu verses often admirable. Get madame du Deffand to show you his Embassy to the princess Christine, and his verses on his eldest uncle, beginning, *Si monsieur de Veau*. His second uncle has parts, but they are not so natural. Madame de Caraman is a very good kind of woman, but has not a quarter of her sister's parts. Madame de Mirepoix is *the* agreeable woman of the world, when she pleases—but there must not be a card in the room. Lord — has acted like himself; that is, unlike any body else. You know, I believe, that I think him a very good speaker; but I have little opinion of his judgment and knowledge of the world, and a great opinion of his affectation and insincerity. The abbé Raynal, though he wrote that fine work on the commerce des deux Indes, is the most tiresome creature in the world. The first time I met him was at the dull baron d'Olbach's: we were twelve at table: I dreaded opening my mouth in French, before so many people and so many servants: he began question-

¹ Mr. Walpole's opinion of this author totally changed upon the appearance of *The Heiress*, which he always called "the genteel comedy" in the English language. E.

² The duc de la Valiere; of whom Mr. Conway had said, that, when presented to him, "his

reception was what might be called good, but rather *de protection*. E.

³ The chevalier de Boufflers, well known for his Letters from Switzerland, addressed to his mother; his *Reine de Golconde*, a tale; and a number of very pretty vers de société. E.

ing me, cross the table, about our colonies, which I understand as I do Coptic. I made him signs I was deaf. After dinner he found I was not, and never forgave me. Mademoiselle Raucoux I never saw till you told me madame du Deffand said she was *demoniaque sans chaleur*! What painting! I see her now. Le Kain sometimes pleased me, oftener not. Molè is charming in genteel, or in pathetic comedy, and would be fine in tragedy, if he was stronger. Preville is always perfection. I like his wife in affected parts, though not animated enough. There was a delightful woman who did the lady Wishforts, I don't know if there still, I think her name mademoiselle Drouin; and a fat woman, rather elderly, who sometimes acted the foubrette. But you have missed the Dumenil, and Caillaut! What irreparable losses! Madame du Deffand, perhaps—I don't know—could obtain your hearing the Clairon—yet the Dumenil was infinitely preferable.

I could now almost find in my heart to laugh at you for liking Boutin's garden¹. Do you know, that I drew a plan of it, as the completest absurdity I ever saw. What! a river that wriggles at right angles through a stone-gutter, with two tanfy puddings that were dug out of it, and three or four beds in a row, by a corner of the wall, with samples of grass, corn, and of en friche, like a taylor's paper of patterns! And you like this! I will tell Park-place—Oh! I had forgot your audience in dumb show—Well, as madame de Sevigné said, Le roi de Prusse, c'est le plus grand roi du monde still². My love to the old parliament: I don't love new ones.

I went several times to madame de Monconseil's, who is just what you say. Mesdames de Tingri & de la Vauguion I never saw: madame de Noailles once or twice, and enough. You say something of madame Mallet,

¹ See another ludicrous description of this garden in a letter to Mr. Chute.

² This alludes to Mr. Conway's presentation to the king of France, Louis XVI. at Fontainebleau, of which in his letter to Mr. Walpole he gives the following account: E.

"On St. Hubert's day in the morning I had the honour of being presented to the king: 'twas a good day and an excellent deed. You may be sure I was well received, the French are so

polite! and their court so polished!—The emperor indeed talked to me every day; so did the king of Prussia regularly and much: but that was not to be compared to the extraordinary reception of his most christian majesty, who, when I was presented, did not stop, nor look to see what sort of an animal was offered to his notice, but carried his head as it seemed somewhat higher, and passed his way."

which I could not read ; for, by the way, your brother and I agree that you are grown not to write legibly: is that lady in being? I knew her formerly. Madame de Blot I know, and monsieur de Paulmy I know, but for heaven's sake who is col. Conway¹? Mademoiselle Sanadon is *la sana donna*, and not mademoiselle *Celadon*², as you call her. Pray assure my good monsieur Schoualow of my great regard: he is one of the best of beings.

I have said all I could, at least all I should. I reserve the rest of my paper for a postscript ; for this is but Saturday, and my letter cannot depart till Tuesday : but I could not for one minute defer answering your charming volumes, which interest me so much. I grieve for lady Harriet's³ swelled face, and wish for both their sakes she could transfer it to her father. I assure her I meant nothing by desiring you to see the verses to the princess Christine⁴, wherein there is very profane mention of a pair of swelled cheeks. I hear nothing of madame d'Olonne⁵.—Oh ! make madame du Deffand show you the sweet portrait of madame de Prie, the duke of Bourbon's mistress⁶. Have you seen madame de Monaco, and the remains of madame de Brionne? If you wish to see Mrs. A——, ask for the princess de Ligne. If you have seen monsieur de Maurepas, you have seen the late lord Hardwicke⁷. By your not naming him, I suppose the duc de Nivernois is not at Paris. Say a great deal for me to M. de Guisnes. You will not see my passion, the duchess de Chatillon. If you see madame de Nivernois, you will think the duke of Newcastle is come to life again. Alas! where is my postscript ?

¹ An officer in the French service.

² Mademoiselle Sanadon, a lady who lived with madame du Deffand.

³ Lady Harriet Stanhope, afterwards married to lord Foley, was at this time at Paris with her father the earl of Harrington.

⁴ By the chevalier de Boufflers.

⁵ The beautiful enamel miniature of madame d'Olonne, now at Strawberry-hill.

⁶ This portrait is now at Strawberry-hill.

⁷ He means from their personal resemblance.

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LETTER XCVII.

Arlington-street, November 27, 1774.

I HAVE received your delightfully plump packet with a letter of six pages, one from madame du Deffand, the *Eloges*, and the *Lit de justice*. Now observe my gratitude: I appoint you my resident at Paris; but you are not to resemble all our ministers abroad, and expect to live at home, which would destroy my lord Castlecomer's¹ view in your staying at Paris. However, to prove to you that I have some gratitude that is not totally selfish, I will tell you what little news I know, before I answer your letter; for English news, to be sure, is the most agreeable circumstance in a letter from England.

On my coming to town yesterday, there was nothing but more deaths—don't you think we have the plague? the bishop of Worcester, lord Breadalbane, lord Strathmore. The first fell from his horse, or with his horse, at Bath, and the bishoprick was incontinently given to bishop North.

America is still more refractory, and I doubt will outvote the ministry. They have picked general Gage's pocket of three pieces of cannon, and intercepted some troops that were going to him. Sir William Draper is writing plans of pacification in our newspapers; and lord Chatham flatters himself that he shall be sent for when the patient is given over; which I don't think at all unlikely to happen. My poor nephew² is very political too: so we shall not want mad-doctors. A-propos, I hear Wilkes says he will propose M—— for speaker.

The ecclesiastical court are come to a resolution that the duchess of Kingston is Mrs. Hervey; and the sentence will be public in a fortnight. It is not so certain that she will lose the estate. Augustus³ is not in a much more pleasant predicament than she is. I saw lord Bristol last night: he looks perfectly well, but his speech is much affected, and his right hand.

¹ A cant phrase of Mr. Walpole's, which took its rise from the following story:

The tutor of a young lord Castlecomer, who lived at Twickenham with his mother, having broke his leg, somebody pitying the poor man, to the mother, lady Castlecomer, she replied,

"Yes, indeed, it is *very inconvenient* to my lord Castlecomer." E.

² George Walpole, earl of Orford.

³ Augustus Hervey, to whom she was first married.

Lady

Lady Lyttelton, who, you know, never hears any thing that has happened, wrote to me two days ago, to ask if it would not be necessary for *you* to come over for the meeting of the parliament. I answered, very gravely, that to be sure you ought: but though *sir James Morgan* threatened you loudly with a petition, yet, as it could not be heard till after Christmas, I was afraid you would not be persuaded to come sooner. I hope she will inquire who *sir James Morgan* is, and that people will persuade her she has made a confusion about *sir James* ———. Now for your letter.

I have been in the *chambre de parlement*, I think they call it the *grande chambre*; and was shown the corner in which the monarchs sit, and do not wonder you did not guess where it was they sat. It is just like the dark corner, under the window, where I always sat in the house of commons. What has happened, has passed exactly according to my ideas. When one king breaks one parliament, and another another, what can the result be but despotism? or of what else is it a proof? If a tory king displaces his father's whig lord chamberlain, neither lord chamberlain has the more or the less power over the theatres and court-mourning and birth-day balls. All that can arrive is, that the people will be still more attached to the old parliament, from this seeming restitution of a right—but the people must have some power before their attachment can signify a straw. The old parliament too may some time or other give itself more airs¹ on this confession of right; but that too cannot be but in a minority, or when the power of the crown is lessened by reasons that have nothing to do with the parliament. I will answer for it, they will be too *grateful* to give umbrage to their restorer. Indeed I did not think the people would be so quick-fighted at once, as to see the distinction of old and new was without a difference. Methinks France and England are like the land and the sea; one gets a little sense when the other loses it.

I am quite satisfied with all you tell me about my friend. My intention is certainly to see her again, if I am able; but I am too old to lay plans, especially when it depends on the despot gout to register or cancel them. It is even melancholy to see her, when it will probably be but once more; and still more melancholy, when we ought to say to one another, in a different sense from the common, *à revoir*! However, as mine is a pretty cheerful

¹ We have seen these *airs* not only the cause of its own destruction, but of one of the greatest revolutions that ever took place in Europe. E.

kind

kind of philosophy, I think the best way is to think of dying, but to talk and act as if one was not to die; or else one tires other people, and dies before one's time. I have truly all the affection and attachment for her that she deserves from me, or I should not be so very thankful as I am for your kindness to her. The Choiseuls will certainly return at Christmas, and will make her life much more agreeable. The duchess has as much attention to her as I could have; but that will not keep me from making her a visit.

I have only seen, not known, the younger madame de Boufflers. For her musical talents, I am little worthy of them—yet I am just going to lady Bingham's to hear the Bastardella, whom, though the first finger in Italy, Mrs. Yates could not or would not agree with¹; and she is to have twelve hundred pounds for singing twelve times at the Pantheon, where, if she had a voice as loud as lord Clare's, she could not be heard. The two bons-mots you sent me are excellent; but, alas! I had heard them both before: consequently your own, which is very good too, pleased me much more. M. de Stainville I think you will not like: he has sense, but has a dry military harshness, that at least did not suit me—and then I hate his barbarity to his wife².

You was very lucky indeed to get one of the sixty tickets³. Upon the whole, your travels have been very fortunate, and the few mortifications amply compensated. If a duke⁴ has been spiteful when your back was turned, a hero-king has been all courtesy. If another king has been silent, an emperor has been singularly gracious. Frowns or silence may happen to any body: the smiles have been addressed to you particularly.—So was the ducal frown indeed—but would you have earned a smile at the price set on it? One cannot do right and be always applauded—but in such cases are not frowns tantamount?

As my letter will not set forth till the day after to-morrow, I reserve the rest for any additional news, and this time *will* reserve it.

¹ To sing at the opera.

² Upon a suspicion of gallantry, she was confined for life.

³ To see the lit de justice held by Louis XVI. when he recalled the parliament of Paris banished

ed by Louis XV. at the instigation of the chancellor Maupeou, and suppressed the new one of their creation. E.

⁴ The duke de Choiseul.

St. Parliament's day, 29th, after breakfast.

THE speech is said to be firm, and to talk of the *rebellion* of our province of Massachusetts. No sloop is arrived yet to tell us how to call the rest. Mr. Van is to move for the expulsion of Wilkes; which will distress, and may produce an odd scene. Lord Holland is certainly dead; the papers say, Robinson too, but that I don't know:—so many deaths of late make report kill to right and left.

L E T T E R XCIII.

Arlington-street, December 15, 1774.

AS I wrote to lady Ailesbury but on Tuesday, I should not have followed it so soon with this, if I had nothing to tell you but of myself. My gout is never dangerous, and the shades of them not important. However, to dispatch this article at once, I will tell you, that the pain I felt yesterday in my elbow made me think all former pain did not deserve the name. Happily the torture did not last above two hours; and, which is more surprising, it is all the real pain I have felt; for though my hand has been as sore as if flayed, and that both feet are lame, the bootkins demonstrably prevent or extract the sting of it, and I see no reason not to expect to get out in a fortnight more. Surely, if I am laid up but one month in two years, instead of five or six, I have reason to think the bootkins sent from heaven.

The long expected sloop is arrived at last, and is indeed a *man of war*!
The general congress have voted,

A non-importation.

A non-exportation.

A non-consumption.

That, in case of hostilities committed by the troops at Boston, the several provinces will march to the assistance of their countrymen.

That the cargoes of ships now at sea shall be sold on their arrival, and the money arising thence given to the poor at Boston.

That

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That a letter, in the nature of a petition of rights, shall be sent to the king; another to the house of *commons*; a third to the people of England; a demand of repeal of all the acts of parliament affecting North America passed during this reign, as also of the Quebec-bill: and these resolutions not to be altered till such repeal is obtained.

Well, I believe you do not regret being neither in parliament nor in administration! As you are an idle man, and have nothing else to do, you may sit down and tell one a remedy for all this. Perhaps you will give yourself airs, and say you was a prophet, and that prophets are not honoured in their own country.—Yet, if you have any inspiration about you, I assure you it will be of great service—We are at our wit's end—which was no great journey.—Oh! you conclude lord Chatham's crutch will be supposed a wand, and be sent for—They might as well send for *my* crutch; and they should not have it; the stile is a little too high to help them over. His lordship is a little fitter for raising a storm than laying one, and of late seems to have lost both virtues. The Americans at least have acted like men, gone to the bottom at once, and set the whole upon the whole. Our conduct has been that of pert children: we have thrown a pebble at a mastiff, and are surprised it was not frightened. Now we must be worried by it, or must kill the guardian of the house, which will be plundered the moment little master has nothing but the old nurse to defend it. But I have done with reflections; you will be fuller of them than I.

LETTER XCIX.

Arlington-street, December 26, 1774.

I BEGIN my letter to-day, to prevent the fatigue of dictating two to-morrow. In the first and best place, I am very near recovered; that is, though still a mummy, I have no pain left, nor scarce any sensation of gout except in my right hand, which is still in complexion and shape a lobster's claw. Now, unless any body can prove to me that three weeks are longer than five months and a half, they will hardly convince me that the bootikins are not a cure for fits of the gout, and a very short cure, though they cannot prevent it: nor perhaps is it to be wished they should; for, if the gout prevents every thing else, would not one have something that does? I have
but

but one single doubt left about the bootikins, which is, whether they do not weaken my breast: but as I am sensible that my own spirits do half the mischief, and that, if I could have held my tongue, and kept from talking and dictating letters, I should not have been half so bad as I have been, there remains but half due to bootikins on the balance: and surely the ravages of the last long fit, and two years more in age, ought to make another deduction. Indeed, my forcing myself to dictate my last letter to you almost killed me; and since the gout is not dangerous to me if I am kept perfectly quiet, my good old friend must have patience, and not insist upon letters from me but when it is quite easy to me to send them. So much for me and my gout. I will now endeavour to answer such parts of your last letters as I can in this manner, and considering how difficult it is to read *your* writing in a dark room.

I have not yet been able to look into the French harangues you sent me. Voltaire's verses to Robert Covelle are not only very bad, but very contemptible.

I am delighted with all the honours you receive, and with all the amusements they procure you, which is the best part of honours. For the glorious part, I am always like the man in Pope's Donne,

"Then happy he who shows the tombs, said I."

That is, they are least troublesome there. The *serenissime** you met at Montmorency is one of the least to my taste; we quarrelled about Rousseau, and I never went near him after my first journey. Madame du D. will tell you the story, if she has not forgotten it.

It is supposed here, that the new proceedings of the French parliament will produce great effects: I don't suppose any such thing. What America will produce I know still less; but certainly something very serious. The merchants have summoned a meeting for the second of next month, and the petition from the congress to the king is arrived. The heads have been shown to lord D——; but I hear one of the agents is against presenting it: yet it is thought it will be delivered, and then be ordered to be laid before parliament. The whole affair has already been talked of there on the army

* The prince de Conti.

and navy-days; and Burke, they say, has shone with amazing wit and ridicule on the late inactivity of Gage, and his losing his cannon and straw; on his being intrenched in a town with an army of observation; with that army being, as sir William Meredith had said, an asylum for magistrates, and to secure the port. Burke said, he had heard of an asylum for debtors and whores, never for magistrates; and of ships, never of armies, securing a port. This is all there has been in parliament, but elections. C—— F——'s place did not come into question. Mr. ———, who is one of the new elect, has opened, but with no success. There is a seaman, Luttrell, that promises much better.

I am glad you like the duchess de Lauzun: she is one of my favourites. The hotel du Chatelet promised to be very fine, but was not finished when I was last at Paris. I was much pleased with the person that slept against St. Lambert's poem: I wish I had thought of the nostrum, when Mr. ———, a thousand years ago, at Lyons, would read an epic poem to me just as I had received a dozen letters from England. St. Lambert is a great jaeknapes, and a very tiny genius. I suppose the poem was *The Seasons*, which is four fairs spun out into a Georgic.

If I had not been too ill, I should have thought of bidding you hear midnight mass on Christmas-eve in madame du Deffand's tribune, as I used to do.

² She became duchesse de Biron upon the death of her husband's grandfather, the marechal duc de Biron.

This amiable, interesting, and virtuous woman, the purity of whose character, even under all the unfavourable circumstances of an ill-suited marriage and a husband's strange neglect, neither French profligacy nor French levity had ever dared asperse, having twice fled to this country, after the revolution in her own, to avoid that violence and those persecutions to which her noble birth and great personal fortune could alone make her liable, unadvisedly returned to Paris in the spring of the year 1794, deluded by fallacious promises of security, and by hopes of preserving some of the very large fortune to which she was heiress, to assist those of her friends and dependants, who, involved in the

same circumstances with herself, had no such resources of their own.

This amiable Being, in the prime of life, and unaccused of any crime, was first confined in her own house, then sent to a common jail, and soon after fell an undistinguished victim to the bloody and ruthless tyranny of Robespierre.

That there may have perished, in the course of his indiscriminate slaughter, many victims equally innocent, is hardly to be doubted; but those who were personally acquainted with the mild unmeddling character, the quiet unassuming sense, and the modest diffident manners of the duchesse de Biron, can never figure her to themselves, hurried by ruffians to a prison, and perishing publicly on a scaffold, without peculiar sentiments of horror, melancholy, and disgust.

E.
To

To be sure, you know that her apartment was part of madame du Montepan's, whose arms are on the back of the grate in madame du Deffaud's own bed-chamber. A-propos, ask her to show you madame de Prie's picture, M. le Duc's mistress—I am very fond of it—and make her tell you her history.

I have but two or three words more. Remember my parcel of letters from madame du D. and pray remember this injunction, not to ruin yourselves in bringing presents. A very slight fairing of a guinea or two obliges as much, is more fashionable, and not a moment sooner forgotten than a magnificent one; and then you may very cheaply oblige the more persons: but as the sick fox, in Gay's Fables, says (for one always excepts oneself),

“A chicken too might do me good—”

I allow you to go as far as three or even five guineas for a snuff-box for me: and then, as ——— told the king, when he asked for the reversion of the Light-house for two lives, and the king reproached him with having always advised him against granting reversions; he replied, “Oh sir, but if your majesty will give me this, I will take care you shall never give away another.”

Adieu, with my own left hand,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER C.

Arlington-street, December 31, 1774.

NO child was ever so delighted to go into breeches, as I was this morning to get on a pair of cloth shoes as big as Jack Harris's: this joy may be the spirits of dotage—but what signifies whence one is happy? Observe too that this is written with my own *right* hand, with the bootikin actually upon it, which has no distinction of fingers: so I no longer see any miracle in Buckinger, who was famous for writing without hands or feet [as if it was

indifferent which one uses, provided one has a pair of either]. Take notice, I write so much better without fingers than with, that I advise *you* to try a bootikin. To be sure, the operation is a little slower; but to a prisoner, the duration of his amusement is of far more consequence than the vivacity of it.

Last night I received your very kind, I might say *your* letter tout court, of Christmas-day. By this time I trust you are quite out of pain about me. My fit has been as regular as possible; only, as if the bootikins were post-horses, it made the grand tour of all my limbs in three weeks. If it will always use the same expedition, I am content it should take the journey once in two years. You must not mind my breast: it was always the weakest part of a very weak system; yet did not suffer now by the gout, but in consequence of it; and would not have been near so bad, if I could have kept from talking and dictating letters. The moment I am out of pain I am in high spirits; and though I never take any medicines, there is one thing absolutely necessary to be put into my mouth—a gag. At present the town is so empty that my tongue is a fine-cure.

I am well acquainted with the Bibliotheque du Roi, and the medals, and the prints. I spent an entire day in looking over the English portraits, and kept the librarian without his dinner till dark night, till I was satisfied. Though the Choiseuls^{*} will not *acquaint* with you, I hope their abbé Barthélemi[†] is not put under the same quarantine. Besides great learning, he has infinite wit and polissonnerie, and is one of the best kind of men in the world. As to the grandpapa[‡], il ne nous aime pas nous autres, and has never forgiven lord Chatham. Though exceedingly agreeable himself, I don't think his taste exquisite.—Perhaps I was piqued; but he seemed to like — better than any of us. Indeed I am a little afraid that my dear friend's impetuous zeal may have been a little too prompt in pressing you upon them d'abord:—but don't say a word of this—it is her great goodness.—I thank you a million of times for all yours to her:—she is perfectly grateful for it.

^{*} Mr. Conway and the ladies of his party had met with the most flattering and distinguished reception at Paris from every body but the duc and duchesse de Choiseul, who rather seemed to decline their acquaintance. E.

[†] The author of the *Voyage du jeune Anacarsis*.

[‡] A name given to the duc de Choiseul by madame du Deffand.

'The chevalier's' verses are pretty enough. I own I like Saurin's^a much better than you seem to do. Perhaps I am prejudiced by the curse on the chancellor at the end.

Not a word of news here. In a sick-room one hears all there is, but I have not heard even a lie: but as this will not set out these three days, it is to be hoped some charitable christian will tell a body one. Lately indeed we heard that the king of Spain had abdicated; but I believe it was some stock-jobber that had deposed him.

Lord George Cavendish, for my solace in my retirement, has given me a book, the History of his own Furness-abbey, written by a Scotch ex-jesuit. I cannot say that this unnatural conjunction of a Cavendish and a jesuit has produced a lively colt; but I found one passage worth any money. It is in an extract of a constable's journal kept during the civil war; and ends thus: "And there was never heard of such troublesome and distracted times as

^a Verses written by the chevalier de Boufflers, to be presented by madame du Deffand to the duke and duchess of Choiseul. They are mere vers de société, and would not be tolerable out of the society for which they were written. E.

^a They were addressed to Mr. de Maleherbes, then premier president de la cour des aides; since still more distinguished by his having been the intrepid, though unsuccessful advocate chosen by the unfortunate Louis XVI. on his trial. He soon after perished by the same guillotine, from which he could not preserve his ill-fated master. E.

The verses were as follow:

Sur monsieur de Maleherbes, premier president de la cour des aides.

O! qu'on aime la bonhomie
Qui dans ta grande ame s'allie
Aux grands talents!

^a The members of the recalled parliament were called *les revenans*.

Tout Paris fête Maleherbes,
Le plus grand et le moins superbe
Des revenans^a.

Jadis l'orateur qu'on renomme,
De l'exil revenu à Rome,
Eût même accueil:
Mais le Ciceron de la France
De l'autre a toute l'éloquence
Sans son orgueil.

Amis, sa gloire l'embarrasse,
Il faudra pourtant qu'il s'y fasse:
Mais filons doux,
Et nous reposons sur l'histoire;
Sans plus lui parler de sa gloire,
Buvons y tous—

À celui qui si bien conseille
Son maître, dont il a l'oreille^a,
Buvons aussi
A sa santé—Je vous la porte,
Mais disons que le diable emporte
On sait bien qui!

^a Le duc de Choiseul.

these

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these five years have been, *but especially for constables.*" It is so natural, that *inconvenient to my lord Castlecomer* is scarce a better proverb.

Pray tell lady A. that though she has been so very good to me, I address my letters to you rather than to her, because my pen is not always upon its guard, but is apt to say whatever comes into its nib; and then if she peeps over your shoulder, I am censured not to know it. Lady Harriet's wishes have done me great good: nothing but a father's gout could be obdurate enough to resist them. My Mrs. D. says nothing to me; but I give her intentions credit, and lay her silence on you.

January 1, 1775; and a happy new year!

I WALK! I walk! walk alone!—I have been five times quite round my room to-day, and my month is not up! The day after to-morrow I shall go down into the dining-room; the next week to take the air; and then if Mrs. ——— is very pressing, why, I don't know what may happen. Well! but you want news—there are none to be had. They think there is a ship lost with Gage's dispatches. Lady Temple gives all her diamonds to miss Nugent. Lord Pigot lost 400 pounds the other night at princess Amelia's. Miss Davis has carried her cause against Mrs. Yates, and is to sing again at the opera. This is all my coffee-house furnished this morning.

LETTER CL.

Arlington-street, January 15, 1775.

YOU have made me very happy by saying your journey to Naples is laid aside. Perhaps it made too great impression on me; but you must reflect, that all my life I have satisfied myself with your being perfect, instead of trying to be so myself. I don't ask you to return, though I wish it: in truth, there is nothing to invite you. I don't want you to come and breathe fire and sword against the Bostonians, like that second duke of Alva the inflexible lord G—— G——; or to anathematize the court and all its works, like the incorruptible B. who scorns lucre, except when he can buy an hundred thousand acres from naked Caribs for a song. I don't want you to do any thing like a party-man. I trust you think of every party as I do,

with contempt, from lord Chatham's mustard-bowl down to lord Rockingham's hartshorn. All perhaps will be tried in their turns; and yet, if they had genius, might not be mighty enough to save us—From some ruin or other I think nobody can, and what signifies an option of mischiefs?

An account is come of the Bostonians having voted an army of sixteen thousand men, who are to be called *minute-men*, as they are to be ready at a minute's warning. Two directors or commissioners, I don't know what they are called, are appointed. There has been too a kind of mutiny in the 5th regiment. A soldier was found drunk on his post. Gage, in this time of *danger*, thought rigour necessary, and sent the fellow to a court-martial. They ordered 200 lashes. The general ordered them to improve their sentence. Next day it was published in the Boston Gazette. He called them before him, and required them on oath to abjure the communication: three officers refused. Poor G. is to be scape-goat, not for this, but for what was a reason against employing him, incapacity. I wonder at the precedent! Howe is talked of for his successor.—Well, I have done with *you*!—Now I shall go gossip with lady A——.

You must know, madam, that near Bath is erected a new Parnassus, composed of three laurels, a myrtle tree, a weeping-willow, and a view of the Avon, which has been new christened Helicon. Ten years ago there lived a madam ——, an old rough humourist who passed for a wit; her daughter who passed for nothing, married to a captain ——, full of good-natured officiousness. These good folks were friends of miss Rich¹, who carried me to dine with them at ——, now Pindus. They caught a little of what was then called taste, built and planted, and begot children, till the whole caravan were forced to go abroad to retrieve. Alas! Mrs. —— is returned a beauty, a genius, a Sappho, a tenth muse, as romantic as mad^{lle} Scuderi, and as sophisticated as Mrs. V——. The captain's fingers are loaded with cameos, his tongue runs over with virtù; and that both may contribute to the improvement of their own country, they have introduced bouts-rimés as a new discovery. They hold a Parnassus-fair every Thursday, give out rhymes and themes, and all the flux of quality at Bath contend for the prizes. A Roman vase dressed with pink ribbands and myrtles receives

¹ Daughter of sir Robert Rich, and sister to the second wife of George lord Lyttelton.

the poetry, which is drawn out every festival: six judges of these Olympic games retire and select the brightest compositions, which the respective successful acknowledge, kneel to Mrs. Calliope —, kiss her fair hand, and are crowned by it with myrtle, with—I don't know what. You may think this a fiction, or exaggeration.—Be dumb, unbelievers! The collection is printed, published—Yes, on my faith! there are bouts-rimés on a buttered muffin, by her grace the duchess of Northumberland; receipts to make them by Corydon the venerable, alias —; others very pretty, by lord P —; some by lord C —; many by Mrs. — herself, that have no fault but wanting metre; and immortality promised to her without end or measure. In short, since folly, which never ripens to madness but in this hot climate, ran distracted, there never was any thing so entertaining, or so dull—for you cannot read so long as I have been telling.

January 17.

BEFORE I could finish this, I received your dispatches by sir T. Clarges, and a most entertaining letter in three tomes. It is being very dull not to be able to furnish a quarter so much from your own country—but what can I do? You are embarked in a new world, and I am living on the scraps of an old one, of which I am tired. The best I can do is to reply to your letter, and not attempt to amuse you when I have nothing to say. I think the parliament meets to-day or in a day or two—but I hope you are coming—Your brother says so, and mad. du Deff. says so; and sure it is time to leave Paris, when you know ninety of the inhabitants. There seems much affectation in those that will not know you; and affectation is always a littleness—it has been even rude; but to be sure the rudeness one feels least is that which is addressed to one before there has been any acquaintance.

Ninon came*, because, on mad. du D.'s mentioning it, I concluded it a new work, and am disappointed. I can say this by heart. The picture of mad. de Prie†, which you don't seem to value, and so mad. du D. says, I believe I shall dispute with you: I think it charming, but when offered to me years ago, I would not take it—it was now given to you a little à mon intention.

I am sorry that, amongst all the verses you have sent me, you should have

* The duke de Choiseul.

† The Life of Ninon de l'Enclos.

‡ It is now at Strawberry-hill.
forgotten

forgotten what you commend the most, *Les trois exclamations*; I hope you will bring them with you. Voltaire's are intolerably stupid; and not above the level of officers in garrison. Some of M. de Pezay's are very pretty, though there is too much of them; and in truth I had seen them before. Those on mad. de la Valiere pretty too, but one is a little tired of Venus and the Graces. I am most pleased with your¹ own—and if you have a mind to like them still better, make mad. du D. show you mine², which are neither French, nor measure, nor metre. She is unwilling to tell me so; which diverts me. Yours are really genteel and new.

I envy you the Russian anecdotes³ more than M. de Chamfort's fables, of which I know nothing; and as you say no more, I conclude I lose not much. The stories of Sir Charles⁴ are so far not new to me, that I heard them of him from abroad after he was mad: but I believe no mortal of his acquaintance ever heard them before; nor did they at all correspond with his former life, with his treatment of his wife, or his history with Mrs. Woffington, qui n'étoit pas dupe. I say nothing on the other stories you tell me of billets dropped⁵, et pour cause.

I think I have touched all your paragraphs, and have nothing new to send you in return. In truth, I go no where but into private rooms; for I am not enough recovered to re-launch into the world, when I have so good an excuse for avoiding it. The bootikins have done wonders; but even two or three such victories will cost too dear. I submit very patiently to my

¹ They were the following lines, sent with a porcelaine déjeuner to the vicomtesse de Cambis at the beginning of the new-year, when it was the universal custom at Paris to interchange small presents known by the name of *etrennes*. E.

L'etrenne qu'on vous offre ici
N'est rare ni mignonne;
Mais les vetilles ont du prix
Quand c'est le cœur qui donne.

De plus encor pour satisfaire
Au scrupule le plus severe,
Il faut penser qu'en acceptant
C'est vous qui faites le present.

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² These lines do not appear.

³ The account of the revolution in Russia which placed Catherine II. on the throne, by M. de la Rulhiere, now published. Mr. Conway had heard it read in manuscript in a private society. E.

⁴ Sir Charles Hanbury Williams.

⁵ This alludes to circumstances Mr. Conway mentions as having taken place at a ball at Versailles.

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lot. I am old and broken, and it never was my system to impose upon myself when one can deceive nobody else. I have spirits enough for my use, that is, amongst my friends and cotemporaries: I like young people and their happiness for every thing but to live with; but I cannot learn their language, nor tell them old stories, of which I must explain every step as I go. Politics, the proper resource of age, I detest—I am contented, but see few that are so—and I never will be led by any man's self-interest. A great scene is opening, of which I cannot expect to see the end; I am pretty sure not a happy end—so that, in short, I am determined to think the rest of my life but a postscript: and as this has been too long an one, I will wish you good night, repeating what you know already, that the return of you three is the most agreeable prospect I expect to see realized. Adieu!

L E T T E R CII.

Strawberry-hill, July 9, 1775.

THE whole business of this letter would lie in half a line. Shall you have room for me on Tuesday the 18th? I am putting myself into motion that I may go farther. I told madame du Deffand how you had scolded me on her account, and she has charged me to thank you, and tell you how much she wishes to see you too. I would give any thing to go—But the going!—However, I really think I shall—but I grow terribly affected with a *maladie de famille*, that of taking root at home.

I did but put my head into London on Thursday, and more bad news from America. I wonder when it will be bad enough to make folks think it so, without going on! The stocks indeed begin to grow a little nervous, and they are apt to affect other pulses. I heard this evening here that the Spanish fleet is failed, and that we are not in the secret whither—but I don't answer for Twickenham gazettes, and I have no better. I have a great mind to tell you a Twickenham story; and yet it will be good for nothing, as I cannot send you the accent in a letter. Here it is; and you must try to set it to the right emphasis. One of our maccaronis is dead, a captain M——, the tea-man's son. He had quitted the army, because his comrades

comrades called him captain Hyson, and applied himself to learn the classics and free-thinking; and was always disputing with the parson of the parish about Dido and his own soul. He married miss Paulin's warehouse, who had six hundred a year; but, being very much out of conceit with his own canister, could not reconcile himself to her riding-hood—so they parted beds in three nights. Of late he has taken to writing comedies, which every body was welcome to hear him read, as he could get nobody to act them. Mrs. M—— has a friend, one Mrs. V——, a mighty plausible good sort of body, who feels for every body, and a good deal for herself, is of a certain age, wears well, has some pretensions that she thinks very reasonable still, and a gouty husband. Well! she was talking to Mr. Raftor about captain M—— a little before he died. Pray, sir, does the captain ever communicate his writings to Mrs. M——?—Oh dear, no, madam; he has a sovereign contempt for her understanding.—Poor woman!—And pray, sir,—give me leave to ask you: I think I have heard that they very seldom sleep together?—Oh, never, madam! Don't you know all that?—*Poor woman!*—I don't know whether you will laugh; but Mr. Raftor, who tells a story better than any body, made me laugh for two hours. Good night.

LETTER CIII.

Paris, September 8, 1775.

THE delays of the post, and its departure before its arrival, saved me some days of anxiety for lady A——, and prevented my telling you how concerned I am for her accident; though I trust by this time she has not even pain left. I feel the horror you must have felt during her suffering in the dark, and on the sight of her arm¹; and though nobody admires her needlework more than I, still I am rejoiced that it will be the greatest sufferer—However, I am very impatient for a farther account. Madame du Deffand, who you know never loves her friends by halves, and whose impatience never allows itself time to inform itself, was out of her wits because I could not explain exactly how the accident happened, and where. She wanted to write directly, though the post was just gone; and as soon as I could make her easy about the accident, she fell into a new distress about her fans for

¹ Lady Ailesbury had been overturned in her carriage at Park-place, and dislocated her wrist.

madame de Marchais, and concludes they have been overturned and broken too. In short, I never saw any thing like her—She has made engagements for me till Monday se'nnight; in which are included I don't know how many journeys into the country; and as nobody ever leaves her without her engaging them for another time, all these parties will be so many polypuses, that will shoot out into new ones every way. Madame de Jonfac, a great friend of mine, arrived the day before yesterday, and madame du Deffand has pinned her down to meeting me at her house four times before next Tuesday, all parentheses, that are not to interfere with our other suppers; and from those suppers I never get to bed before two or three o'clock. In short, I need have the activity of a squirrel, and the strength of a Hercules, to go through my labours—not to count how many *démêlés* I have had to raccommode, and how many *memoires* to present against Tonton¹, who grows the greater favourite the more people he devours. As I am the only person who dare correct him, I have already insisted on his being confined in the Bastille every day after five o'clock. T'other night he flew at lady Barrymore's face, and I thought would have torn her eye out; but it ended in biting her finger. She was terrified; she fell into tears. Madame du Deffand, who has too much parts not to see every thing in its true light, perceiving that she had not beaten Tonton half enough, immediately told us a story of a lady, whose dog having bitten a piece out of a gentleman's leg, the tender dame, in a great fright, cried out, "Won't it make my dog sick?"

Lady Barrymore has taken a house. She will be gluttoned with conquests: I never saw any body so much admired. I doubt her poor little head will be quite overset.

Madame de Marchais is charming: eloquence and attention itself. I cannot stir for peaches, nectarines, grapes and bury-pears. You would think Pomona was in love with me. I am not so transported with N—cock and hen. They are a tabor and pipe that I do not understand. He mouths and she squeaks, and neither articulates. M. d'Entragues I have not seen. Upon the whole, I am much more pleased with Paris than ever I was; and, perhaps, shall stay a little longer than I intended. The Harry

¹ A favourite dog of madame du Deffand's.

Grenvilles^{*} are arrived. I dined with them at madame de Viry's[†], who has completed the conquest of France by her behaviour on madame Clotilde's wedding, and by the fêtes she gave. Of other English I wot not, but grieve the Richmonds do not come.

I am charmed with doctor Bally; nay, and with the king of Prussia—as much as I can be with a northern monarch. For your Kragen, I think we ought to procure a female one, and marry it to Ireland, that we may breed some new islands against we have lost America. I know nothing of said America. There is not a Frenchman that does not think us distracted.

I used to scold you about your bad writing, and perceive I have written in such a hurry and blotted my letter so much, that you will not be able to read it: but consider how few moments I have to myself. I am forced to stuff my ears with cotton to get any sleep.—However, my journey has done me good. I have thrown off at least fifteen years. Here is a letter for my dear Mrs. D—— from madame de ——, who thinks she dotes on you all. Adieu!

P. S. I shall bring you two eloges of marshal Catinat, not because I admire them, but because I admire him, because I think him very like you.

L E T T E R C I V.

Paris, October 6, 1775.

IT will look like a month since I wrote to you; but I have been coming, and am. Madame du Deffand has been so ill, that the day she was seized I thought she would not live till night. Her Herculean weakness, which could not resist strawberries and cream after supper, has surmounted all the *ups* and *downs* which followed her excess; but her impatience to go every where and do every thing has been attended with a kind of relapse, and

^{*} Henry Grenville, brother to the first earl comte de Viry when he was minister at London from the court of Turin. She is one of the celebrated beauty. ladies to whom Gray's long story is addressed. E.

[†] Miss Harriet Speed. She had married M. le

another

another kind of giddiness: so that I am not quite easy about her, as they allow her to take no nourishment to recruit, and she will die of inanition, if she does not live upon it. She cannot lift her head from the pillow without étourdissemens; and yet her spirits gallop faster than any body's, and so do her repartees. She has a great supper to-night for the duc de Choiseul, and was in such a passion yesterday with her cook about it, and that put Tonton into such a rage, that nos dames de saint Joseph thought the devil or the philosophers were flying away with their convent! As I have scarce quitted her, I can have had nothing to tell you. If she gets well, as I trust, I shall set out on the 12th; but I cannot leave her in any danger—though I shall run many myself, if I stay longer. I have kept such bad hours with this *malade*, that I have had alarms of gout; and bad weather, worse inns, and a voyage in winter, will ill suit me. The fans arrived at a propitious moment, and she immediately had them opened on her bed, and felt all the patterns, and had all the papers described. She was all satisfaction and thanks, and swore me to do her full justice to lady A—and Mrs. D—. Lord Harrington and lady Harriet are arrived; but have announced and persisted in a strict invisibility.

I know nothing of my chère patrie, but what I learn from the London Chronicle; and that tells me, that the trading towns are suing out lettres de noblesse, that is, entreating the king to put an end to commerce, that they may all be gentlemen. Here agriculture, œconomy, reformation, philosophy, are the bon-ton even at court. The two nations seem to have crossed over and figured in; but as people that copy take the bad with the good, as well as the good with the bad, there was two days ago a great horse-race in the plain de Sablon, between the comte d'Artois, the duc de Chartres, monsieur de Conflans, and the duc de Lauzun. The latter won by the address of a little English postillion, who is in such fashion, that I don't know whether the Academy will not give him for the subject of an eloge.

The duc de Choiseul, I said, is here; and as he has a second time put off his departure, cela fait beaucoup de bruit. I shall not be at all surpris'd if he resumes the reins, as (forgive me a pun) he has the *Reine* already. Messrs. de Turgot and Malesherbes certainly totter—but I shall tell you no more till I see you; for, though this goes by a private hand, it is so private, that I don't know it, being an English merchant's, who lodges in this hotel,

and

and whom I do not know by sight: so perhaps I may bring you word of this letter myself. I flatter myself lady A——'s arm has recovered its straightness and its cunning.

Madame du Deffand says I love you better than any thing in the world. If true, I hope you have not less penetration: if you have not, or it is not true, what would professions avail?—So I leave that matter in suspense. Adieu!

October 7.

MADAME du Deffand was quite well yesterday; and at near one this morning I left the duc de Choiseul, the duchess de Grammont, the prince and princess of Beauveau, princess of Poix, the marechale de Luxembourg, duchess de Lauzun, ducs de Gontaut et de Chabot, and Caraccioli, round her chaise longue; and she herself was not a dumb personage. I have not heard yet how she has slept, and must send away my letter this moment, as I must dress to go to dinner with monsieur de Maleherbes at madame de Villégagnon's. I must repose a great while after all this living in company; nay, intend to go very little into the world again, as I do not admire the French way of burning one's candle to the very snuff in public. Tell Mrs. D——, that the fashion now is to erect the toupée into a high detached tuft of hair, like a cockatoo's crest; and this toupée they call *la physionomie*—I don't guess why.

My laquais is come back from saint Joseph's, and says Marie de Vichy¹ has had a very good night and is quite well.—Philip², let my chaise be ready on Thursday.

LETTER CV.

Strawberry-hill, June 30, 1776.

I WAS very glad to receive your letter, not only because always most glad to hear of you, but because I wished to write to you, and had absolutely nothing to say till I had something to answer. I have lain but two nights in town since I saw you, have been else constantly here, very

¹ The maiden name of madame du Deffand.

² Mr. Walpole's valet de chambre.

much employed, though doing, hearing, knowing exactly nothing. I have had a gothic architect from Cambridge to design me a gallery, which will end in a mouse, that is, in an hexagon closet of seven feet diameter. I have been making a beauty-room, which was effected by buying two dozen of small copies of sir Peter Lely, and hanging them up; and I have been making hay, which is not made, because I put it off for three days, as I chose it should adorn the landscape when I was to have company; and so the rain is come, and has drowned it.—However, as I can even turn calculator when it is to comfort me for not minding my interest, I have discovered that it is five to one better for me that my hay should be spoiled than not; for, as the cows will eat it if it is damaged, which horses will not, and as I have five cows and but one horse, is not it plain that the worse my hay is, the better? Do not you with your refining head go, and, out of excessive friendship, find out something to destroy my system. I had rather be a philosopher than a rich man; and yet have so little philosophy, that I had much rather be content than be in the right.

Mr. — and lady — have been here four or five days—so I had both content and exercise for my philosophy. I wish lady — was as fortunate! The Pembrokes, Churchills, Le Texier, as you will have heard, and the Garricks, have been with us. Perhaps, if alone, I might have come to you—but you are all too healthy and-harmonious. I can neither walk nor sing—nor, indeed, am fit for any thing but to amuse myself in a sedentary trifling way. What I have most certainly not been doing, is writing any thing: a truth I say to you, but do not desire you to repeat. I deign to satisfy scarce any body else. Whoever reported that I was writing any thing, must have been so totally unfounded, that they either blundered by guessing without reason, or knew they lied—and that could not be with any kind intention; though saying I am going to do what I am not going to do, is wretched enough. Whatever is said of me without truth, any body is welcome to believe that pleases. In fact, though I have scarce a settled purpose about any thing, I think I shall never write any more. I have written a great deal too much, unless I had written better, and I know I should now only write still worse. One's talent, whatever it is, does not improve at near sixty—yet, if I liked it, I dare to say a good reason would not stop my inclination:—but I am grown most indolent in that respect, and most absolutely indifferent to every purpose of vanity. Yet without vanity I am become still prouder and more contemptuous. I have a con-
tempt

tempt for my countrymen that makes me despise their approbation. The applause of slaves and of the foolish mad is below ambition. Mine is the haughtiness of an ancient Briton, that cannot write what would please this age, and would not if he could. Whatever happens in America, this country is undone. I desire to be reckoned of the last age, and to be thought to have lived to be superannuated, preserving my senses only for myself and for the few I value. I cannot aspire to be traduced like Algernon Sydney, and content myself with sacrificing to him amongst my lares. Unalterable in my principles, careless about most things below essentials, indulging myself in trifles by system, annihilating myself by choice, but dreading folly at an unseemly age, I contrive to pass my time agreeably enough, yet see its termination approach without anxiety. This is a true picture of my mind; and it must be true, because drawn for you, whom I would not deceive, and could not if I would. Your question on my being writing drew it forth, though with more seriousness than the report deserved—yet talking to one's dearest friend is neither wrong nor out of season. Nay, you are my best apology. I have always contented myself with your being perfect, or, if your modesty demands a mitigated term, I will say, unexceptionable. It is comical, to be sure, to have always been more solicitous about the virtue of one's friend than about one's own—yet I repeat it, you are my apology—though I never was so unreasonable as to make you answerable for my faults in return: I take them wholly to myself—But enough of this. When I know my own mind, for hitherto I have settled no plan for my summer, I will come to you. Adieu!

LETTER CVI.

Thursday, 31.

THANK you for your letter. I send this by the coach. You will have found a new scene—not an unexpected one by you and me, though I do not pretend I thought it so near. I rather imagined France would have instigated or winked at Spain's beginning with us. Here is a solution of the Americans declaring themselves independent. Oh! the folly, the madness, the guilt of having plunged us into this abyss! Were we and a few more endued with any uncommon penetration?—No—They who did

^a On the opening of the parliament in the year 1776.

not see as far, *would* not. I am impatient to hear the complexion of to-day. I suppose it will on the part of administration have been a wretched farce of fear daubed over with airs of bullying. You, I do not doubt, have acted like yourself, feeling for our situation, above insulting, and unprovoked but at the criminality that has brought us to this pass. Pursue your own path, nor lean to the court that may be paid to you on either side, as I am sure you will not regard their being displeased that you do not go as far as their interested views may wish.

If the court should receive any more of what they call good news, I think the war with France will be unavoidable. It was the victory at Long Island, and the frantic presumption it occasioned, that has ripened France's measures—And now we are to awe them by pressing—an act that speaks our impotence!—which France did not want to learn!

I would have come to town, but I had declared so much I would not, that I thought it would look as if I came to enjoy the distress of the ministers—but I do not enjoy the distress of my country. I think we are undone—I have always thought so—whether we enslaved America or lost it totally—So we that were against the war could expect no good issue. If you do return to Park-place to-morrow, you will oblige me much by breakfasting here: you know it wastes you very little time.

I am glad I did not know of Mrs. D——'s sore throat till it is almost well. Pray take care and do not catch it.

Thank you for your care of me: I will not stay a great deal here, but at present I never was better in my life—and here I have no vexatious moments. I hate to dispute; I scorn to triumph myself, and it is very difficult to keep my temper when others do. I own I have another reason for my retirement, which is prudence. I have thought of it late, but at least I will not run into any new expence. It would cost me more than I care to afford to buy a house in town, unless I do it to take some of my money out of the stocks, for which I tremble a little. My brother is seventy; and if I live myself, I must not build too much on his life; and you know, if he fails, I lose the most secure part of my income. I refused from lord Holland, and last year from lord North, to accept the place for my own life; and having never done a dirty thing, I will not disgrace myself

myself at fifty-nine. I should like to live as well as I have done; but what I wish more, is to secure what I have already saved for those I would take care of after me. These are the true reasons of my dropping all thoughts of a better house in town, and of living so privately here. I will not sacrifice my health to my prudence; but my temper is so violent, that I know the tranquillity I enjoy here in solitude, is of much more benefit to my health, than the air of the country is detrimental to it. You see I can be reasonable when I have time to reflect; but philosophy has a poor chance with me when my warmth is stirred—and yet I know, that an angry old man out of parliament, and that can do nothing but be angry, is a ridiculous animal.

LETTER CVII.

LETTER CVII.

Strawberry-hill, July 10, 1777.

DON'T be alarmed at this thousandth letter in a week. This is more to lady Hamilton¹ than to you. Pray tell her I have seen *monfieur la Bataille d'Agincourt*². He brought me her letter yesterday: and I kept him to sup, *sleep* in the modern phrase, and breakfast here this morning; and flatter myself he was, and she will be, content with the regard I paid to her letter.

The weather is a thought warmer to-day, and I am as busy as bees are about their hay. My *haystians*³ have cost me as much as if I had hired them of the landgrave.

I am glad your invasion⁴ is blown over. I fear I must invite those flat-bottomed vessels hither, as the Swissess Necker has directed them to the port of Twickenham. Madame de Blot is too fine, and monfieur Schomberg one of the most disagreeable, cross, contemptuous savages I ever saw. I have often supped with him at the duchess de Choiseul's, and could not bear him; and now I must be *charmé* and *penetré* and *comblé* to see him:

¹ The first wife of Sir William Hamilton, envoy extraordinary at the court of Naples.

² Hessians.

³ A party of French nobility then in England, who were to have made a visit at Park-place.

⁴ M. le chevalier d'Azincourt, a French anti-quary, long settled in Italy.

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and I shall act it very ill, as I always do when I don't do what I like. Madame Necker's letter is as affected and *précieuse*, as if Marmontel had written it for a Peruvian milk-maid. She says I am a philosopher, and as like madame de Sevigné as two peas—who was as unlike a philosopher as a gridiron. As I have none of madame de Sevigné's natural easy wit, I am rejoiced that I am no more like a philosopher neither, and still less like a *philosophe*; which is a being compounded of D'Urfey and Diogenes, a pastoral coxcomb and a supercilious brute.

LETTER CVIII.

Tuesday evening, Sept. 16, 1777.

I HAVE got a delightful plaything, if I had time for play. It is a new sort of camera-obscura* for drawing the portraits of persons, or prospects, or insides of rooms, and does not depend on the sun or any thing. The misfortune is, that there is a vast deal of machinery and putting together, and I am the worst person living for managing it. You know I am impenetrably dull in every thing that requires a grain of common sense. The inventor is to come to me on Friday, and try if he can make me remember my right hand from my left. I could as soon have invented my machine as manage it; yet it has cost me ten guineas, and may cost me as much more as I please for improving it. You will conclude it was the dearness tempted me. I believe I must keep an astronomer, like Mr. Beauclerc, to help me to play with my rattle. The inventor, who seems very modest and simple, but I conclude an able flatterer, was in love with my house, and vowed nothing ever suited his camera so well. To be sure, the painted windows and the prospects, and the gothic chimneys, &c. &c. were the delights of one's eyes, when no bigger than a silver penny. You would know how to manage it, as if you had never done any thing else. Had not you better come and see it? You will learn how to conduct it, with the pleasure of correcting my awkwardness and *unlearnability*. Sir Joshua Reynolds and West have each got one; and the duke of Northumberland is so charmed with the invention, that I dare say he can talk upon and explain it till I should understand ten times less of the matter than I

* The machine called a delineator.

do. Remember, neither lady A. nor you, nor Mrs. D. have seen my new divine closet, nor the billiard-sticks with which the countess of Pembroke and Arcadia used to play with her brother sir Philip; nor the portrait of la belle Jennings in the state bedchamber. I go to town this day se'nnight for a day or two; and as, *to be sure*, Mount-Edgumbe has put you out of humour with Park-place, you may deign to leave it for a moment. I never did see Cotchel¹, and am sorry. Is not the old wardrobe there still? There was one from the time of Cain; but Adam's breeches and Eve's under petticoat were eaten by a goat in the ark. Good-night.

LETTER CIX.

October 5, 1777.

YOU are exceedingly good, and I shall assuredly accept your proposal in the fullest sense, and, to ensure Mrs. D——, beg I may expect you on Saturday next the 11th. If lord and lady William Campbell will do me the honour of accompanying you, I shall be most happy to see them, and expect miss Caroline². Let me know about them, that the state bed-chamber may be aired.

My difficulties about removing from home arise from the consciousness of my own weakness. I make it a rule, as much as I can, to conform wherever I go. Though I am threescore to-day, I should not think that an age for giving every thing up; but it is for whatever one has not strength to perform. You, though not a vast deal younger, are as healthy and strong, thank God, as ever you was: and you cannot have ideas of the mortification of being stared at by strangers and servants, when one hobbles, or cannot do as others do. I delight in being with you, and the Richmonds, and those I love and know; but the crowds of young people, and Chichester folks, and officers, and strange servants, make me afraid of Goodwood, I own. My spirits are never low, but they will seldom last out the whole day; and though I dare to say I appear to many capricious, and different from the rest of the world, there is more reason in my behaviour than there seems. You

¹ The old residence of the family of Edgumbe, 12 miles distant from Mount Edgumbe.

² Miss Caroline Campbell, eldest daughter of lord William Campbell.

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know in London I seldom stir out in a morning, and always late; and it is because I want a great deal of rest. Exercise never did agree with me; and it is hard if I do not know myself by this time; and what has done so well with me will probably suit me best for the rest of my life. It would be ridiculous to talk so much of myself, and to enter into such trifling details, but you are the person in the world that I wish to convince that I do not act chiefly from humour or ill-humour; though I confess at the same time that I want your bonhomie, and have a disposition not to care at all for people that I do not absolutely like. I could say a great deal more on this head, but it is not proper; though, when one has pretty much done with the world, I think with lady Blandford that one may indulge one's self in one's own whims and partialities in one's own house. I do not mean, still less to profess, retirement, because it is less ridiculous to go on with the world to the last, than to return to it: but in a quiet way it has long been my purpose to drop a great deal of it. Of all things I am farthest from not intending to come often to Park-place, whenever you have little company; and I had rather be with you in November than in July, because I am so totally unable to walk farther than a snail. I will never say any more on these subjects, because there may be as much affectation in being over-old, as folly in being over-young. My idea of age is, that one has nothing really to do but what one ought, and what is reasonable. All affectations are pretensions; and pretending to be any thing one is not, cannot deceive when one is known, as every body must be that has lived long. I do not mean that old folks may not have pleasures, if they can; but then I think those pleasures are confined to being comfortable, and to enjoying the few friends one has not outlived. I am so far as to own, that one's duties are not pleasures. I have given up a great deal of my time to nephews and nieces, even to some I can have little affection for. I do love my nieces, nay like them; but people above forty years younger are certainly not the society I should seek. They can only think and talk of what is, or is to come; I certainly am more disposed to think and talk of what is past: and the obligation of passing the end of a long life in sets of totally new company is more irksome to me than passing a great deal of my time, as I do, quite alone. Family love and pride make me interest myself about the young people of my own family—for the whole rest of the young world, they are as indifferent to me as puppets or black children. This is my creed, and a key to my whole conduct, and the more likely to remain my

creed,

creed, as I think it is *raisonné*. If I could paint my opinions instead of writing them, and I don't know whether it would not make a new sort of alphabet, I should use different colours for different affections at different ages¹. When I speak of love, affection, friendship, taste, liking, I should draw them rose colour, carmine, blue, green, yellow, for my cotemporaries: for new comers, the first would be of no colour; the others, purple, brown, crimson, and changeable. Remember, one tells one's creed only to one's confessor, that is *sub sigillo*. I write to you as I think; to others as I must. Adieu!

LETTER CX.

July 8, 1778.

I HAVE had some conversation with a ministerial person, on the subject of pacification with France; and he dropped a hint, that as we should not have much chance of a good peace, the opposition would make great clamour on it. I said a few words on the duty of ministers to do what they thought right, be the consequence what it would. But as honest men do not want such lectures, and dishonest will not let them weigh, I waved that theme, to dwell on what is more likely to be persuasive, and which I am firmly persuaded is no less true than the former maxim; and that was, that the ministers are *still* so strong, that if they could get a peace that would save the nation, though not a brilliant or glorious one, the nation in general would be pleased with it, and the clamours of the opposition be insignificant.

I added, what I think true too, that no time is to be lost in treating; not only for preventing a blow, but from the consequences the first misfortune would have. The nation is not yet alienated from the court, but it is growing so; is grown so enough, for any calamity to have violent effects. Any internal disturbance would advance the hostile designs of France. An insurrection from distress would be a double invitation to invasion; and, I am sure, much more to be dreaded, even personally, by the ministers, than the ill-humours of opposition for even an inglorious peace. To do the opposition justice, it is not composed of incendiaries. Parliamentary speeches

¹ This whimsical appropriation of colours to those acquainted with Mr. Walpole's particular opinion of particular colours. E.

raise no tumults; but tumults would be a dreadful thorough basis to speeches. The ministers do not know the strength they have left (supposing they apply it in time), if they are afraid of making any peace. They were too sanguine in making war; I hope they will not be too timid of making peace.

What do you think of an idea of mine, of offering France a neutrality? that is, to allow her to assist both us and the Americans. I know she would assist only them: but were it not better to connive at her assisting them, without attacking us, than her doing both? A treaty with her would perhaps be followed by one with America. We are sacrificing all the essentials we *can* recover, for a few words; and risking the independence of this country, for the nominal supremacy over America. France seems to leave us time for treating. She made no scruple of begging peace of us in 63, that she might lie by and recover her advantages. Was not that a wise precedent? Does not she *now* show that it was? Is not policy the honour of nations? I mean, not morally, but has Europe left itself any other honour? And since it has really left itself no honour, and as little morality, does not the morality of a nation consist in its preserving itself in as much happiness as it can? The invasion of Portugal by Spain in the last war, the partition of Poland, have abrogated the law of nations. Kings have left no ties between one another. Their duty to their people is still allowed. He is a good king that preserves his people; and if temporising answers that end, is it not justifiable? You, who are as moral as wise, answer my questions. Grotius is obsolete. Dr. Joseph^{*} and Dr. Frederic[†], with four hundred thousand commentators, are reading new lectures—and I should say, thank God, to one another, if the four hundred thousand commentators were not in worse danger than they. Louis XIV. is grown a casuist compared to those partitioners. Well, let us simple individuals keep our honesty, and bless our stars that we have not armies at our command, lest we should divide kingdoms that are at our bienséance! What a dreadful thing it is for such a wicked little imp as man to have absolute power!—But I have travelled into Germany, when I meant to talk to you only of England; and it is too late to recall my text. Good-night.

^{*} The emperor of Germany.

[†] Frederic II. king of Prussia.

LETTER CXI.

Saturday, July 18, 1778.

YESTERDAY evening the following notices were fixed up in Lloyd's coffee-house:

That a merchant in the City had received an express from France, that the Brest fleet, consisting of 28 ships of the line, were sailed, with orders to burn, sink, and destroy.

That admiral Keppel was at Plymouth, and had sent to demand three more ships of the line to enable him to meet the French.

On these notices the stocks sunk $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

An account I have received this morning from a good hand says, that on Thursday the Admiralty received a letter from admiral Keppel, who was off the Land's End, saying, that the Worcester was in sight; that the Peggy had joined him, and had seen the Thunderer making sail for the fleet; that he was waiting for the Centaur, Terrible, and Vigilant; and that having received advice from lord Shulldham that the Shrewsbury was to sail from Plymouth on Thursday, he should likewise wait for her. His fleet will then consist of 30 ships of the line; and he hoped to have an opportunity of trying his strength with the French fleet on our own coast: if not, he would seek them on theirs.

The French fleet sailed on the 7th, consisting of 31 ships of the line, 2 fifty gun ships, and 8 frigates.

This state is probably more authentic than those at Lloyd's.

Thus you see how big the moment is! and, unless far more favourable to us in its burst than good sense allows one to promise, it must leave us greatly exposed. Can we expect to beat without considerable loss?—and then, where have we another fleet? I need not state the danger from a reverse.

The Spanish ambassador certainly arrived on Monday.

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I shall go to town on Monday for a day or two ; therefore, if you write to-morrow, direct to Arlington-street.

I add no more : for words are unworthy of the situation ; and to blame now, would be childish. It is hard to be gamed for against one's consent ; but when one's country is at stake, one must throw one's self out of the question. When one is old, and nobody, one must be whirled with the current, and shake one's wings like a fly, if one lights on a pebble. The prospect is so dark, that one shall rejoice at whatever does not happen, that may. Thus I have composed a sort of philosophy for myself, that reserves every possible chance. You want none of these artificial aids to your resolution. Invincible courage and immaculate integrity are not dependent on the folly of ministers or on the events of war. Adieu !

LETTER CXII.

Strawberry-hill, August 21, 1778.

I THINK it so very uncertain whether this letter will find you, that I write it merely to tell you I received yours to-day.

I recollect nothing particularly worth seeing in Suffex that you have not seen (for I think you have seen Coudray and Stansted, and I know you have Petworth), but Hurst Monceaux near Battle ; and I don't know whether it is not pulled down. The site of Arandel castle is fine, and there are some good tombs of the Fitzalans at the church, but little remains of the castle ; in the room of which is a modern brick-house ; and in the late duke's time the ghost of a giant walked there his grace said—but I suppose the present duke has laid it in the Red Sea—of claret.

Beside Knowle and Penshurst, I should think there were several seats of old families in Kent worth seeing ; but I do not know them. I poked out Summer-hill for the sake of the *Babylonienne* in Grammont ; but it is now a mere farm-house. Don't let them persuade you to visit Leeds castle, which is not worth seeing.

You have been near losing me and half-a-dozen fair cousins to-day. The

Harb I

Goldsmiths

Goldsmiths company dined in Mr. Shirley's field, next to Pope's. I went to Ham with my three Waldegrave nieces and miss Keppel, and saw them land, and dine in tents erected for them from the opposite shore. You may imagine how beautiful the sight was in such a spot and in such a day! I staid and dined at Ham, and after dinner lady Dyfart with lady Bridget Tollemache took our four nieces on the water to see the return of the barges, but were to set me down at lady Browne's. We were, with a footman and the two watermen, ten in a little boat. As we were in the middle of the river, a larger boat full of people drove directly upon us on purpose. I believe they were drunk. We called to them, to no purpose; they beat directly against the middle of our little skiff—but, thank you, did not do us the least harm—no thanks to them. Lady Malpas was in lord Strafford's garden, and gave us for gone. In short, Neptune never would have had so beautiful a prize as the four girls.

I hear an express has been sent to — to offer him the mastership of the horse. I had a mind to make you guess, but you never can—to lord Exeter.

Pray let me know the moment you return to Park-place.

LETTER CXIII.

October 23, 1778.

—having thus told you all I know, I shall add a few words, to say I conclude you have known as much, by my not having heard from you. Should the post-office or secretary's office set their wits at work to bring to light all the intelligence contained under the above hiatus, I am confident they will discover nothing, though it gives an exact description of all they have been about themselves.

My personal history is very short. I have had an assembly and the rheumatism—and am buying a house—and it rains—and I shall plant the roses against my treillage to-morrow. Thus you know what I have done, suffered, am doing, and shall do. Let me know as much of you, in quantity, not in quality. Introductions to and conclusions of letters are as much out of fashion, as *to*, *at*, &c. on letters. This sublime age reduces every

thing to its quintessence: all periphrases and expletives are so much in disuse, that I suppose soon the only way of making love will be to say "*Lie down.*" Luckily, the lawyers will not part with any synonymous words, and will, consequently, preserve the redundancies of our language—Dixi.

LETTER CXIV.

Arlington-street, January 9, 1779.

YOUR flight to Bath would have much surpris'd me, if Mr. C. who, I think, heard it from Stanley, had not prepared me for it. Since you was amus'd, I am glad you went, especially as you escap'd being initiated in Mrs. ———'s follies at ———, which you would have mentioned. She would certainly have sent some trapes of a muse to press you, had she known what good epigrams you write.

I went to Strawberry partly out of prudence, partly from ennui. I thought it best to air myself before I go in and out of hot rooms here, and had my house thoroughly warmed for a week previously, and then only stirr'd from the red room to the blue on the same floor. I staid five days, and was neither the better nor the worse for it. I was quite tired with having neither company, books, nor amusement of any kind. Either from the emptiness of the town, or that ten weeks of gout have worn out the patience of all my acquaintance, but I do not see three persons in three days. This gives me but an uncomfortable prospect for my latter days: it is but probable that I may be a cripple in a fit or two more, if I have strength to go through them; and as that will be long life, one outlives one's acquaintance. I cannot make new acquaintance, nor interest myself at all about the young, except those that belong to me; nor does that go beyond contributing to their pleasures, without having much satisfaction in their conversation—But—one must take every thing as it comes, and make the best of it. I have had a much happier life than I deserve, and than millions that deserve better. I should be very weak, if I could not bear the uncomfortable-ness of old age, when I can afford what comforts it is capable of. How many poor old people have none of them! I am ashamed whenever I am peevish, and recollect that I have fire and servants to help me!

I hear

I hear admiral Keppel is in high spirits with the great respect and zeal expressed for him. In my own opinion, his constitution will not stand the struggle. I am very uneasy too for the duke of R——, who is at Portsmouth, and will be at least as much agitated.

Sir ——— has written a large pamphlet, and a very good one. It is to show, that whenever the Grecian republics taxed their dependents, the latter resisted, and shook off the yoke. He has printed but twelve copies: the duke of G. sent me one of them. There is an anecdote of my father, on the authority of old Jack White, which I doubt. It says, he would not go on with the excise scheme, though his friends advised it. I cannot speak to the particular event, as I was then at school; but it was more like him to have yielded against his sentiments, to Mr. Pelham and his candid—or say, plausible and timid friends. I have heard him say, that he never did give up his opinion to such men, but he always repented it. However, the anecdote in the book would be more to his honour. But what a strange man is sir ———! I suppose now he has written this book, he will change his opinion, and again be for carrying on the war—or, if he does not know his own mind for two years together, why will he take places, to make every body doubt his honesty?

L E T T E R . CXV.

Arlington-street, May 22, 1779.

IF you hear of us no oftener than we of you, you will be as much behind hand in news as my lady Lyttelton. We have seen a traveller that saw you in your island¹, but it sounds like hearing of Ulysses.—Well! we must be content. You are not only not dethroned, but owe the safety of your dominions to your own skill in fortification. If we do not hear of your extending your conquests, why, it is not less than all our modern heroes have done, whom prophets have foretold and gazettes celebrated—or who have foretold and celebrated themselves. Pray be content to be cooped up in an island that has no neighbours, when the Howes and Clin-

¹ Mr. Conway was now at his government, Jersey.

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tous, and Dunmores and Burgoynes and Campbells are not yet got beyond the great river—Inquiry! To-day's papers say, that the *little prince of Orange** is to invade you again—but we trust sir James Wallace has clipped his wings so close, that they will not grow again this season, though he is so ready to fly.

Nothing material has happened since I wrote last—so, as every moment of a civil war is precious, every one has been turned to the interest of diversion. There have been three masquerades, an installation, and the ball of the knights at the Haymarket this week; not to mention Almack's, Festino, lady Spencer's, Ranelagh and Vauxhall, operas and plays. The duchess of Bolton too saw masks—so many, that the floor gave way, and the company in the dining-room were near falling on the heads of those in the parlour, and exhibiting all that has not yet appeared in Doctor's Commons. At the knights' ball was such a profusion of Strawberries, that people could hardly get into the supper-room.—I could tell you more, but I do not love to exaggerate.

Lady A. told me this morning, that lord Bristol has got a calf with two feet to each leg—I am convinced it is by the duchess of Kingston, who has two of every thing, where others have but one.

Adieu!—I am going to sup with Mrs. Abington—and hope Mrs. Clive will not hear of it.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

*The parliamentary inquiry which took place in the house of commons on the conduct of the American war. the attack upon Jersey, claiming relationship to the great house of Nassau, Mr. Walpole calls the "*little prince of Orange*." E.

The prince of Nassau, who had commanded

LETTER

LETTER CXVI.

Strawberry-hill, Saturday June 5, 1779.

I WRITE to you more seldom than I am disposed to do, from having nothing positive to tell you, and from being unwilling to say and unsay every minute something that is reported positively. The confident assertions of the victory over D'Estaing are totally vanished—and they who invented them, now declaim as bitterly against Byron, as if he had deceived them—and as they did against Keppel. This day se'nnight there was a great alarm about Ireland—which was far from being all invention, though not an absolute insurrection, as was said. The case, I believe, was this: The court, in order to break the volunteer army established by the Irish themselves, endeavoured to persuade a body in lady Blayney's county of Monaghan to enlist in the militia—which they took indignantly. They said, they had great regard for lady Blayney and lord Clermont; but to act under them, would be acting under the king, and that was by no means their intention. There have since been motions for inquiries what steps the ministers have taken to satisfy the Irish—and these they have imprudently rejected—which will not tend to pacification. The ministers have been pushed too on the article of Spain, and could not deny that all negotiation is at an end—though they will not own farther. However, the Spanish ambassador is much out of humour. From Paris they write confidently of the approaching declaration; and lord Sandwich, I hear, has said in a very mixed company, that it was folly not to expect it. There is another million asked, and given on a vote of credit; and lord North has boasted of such mines for next year, that one would think he believed next year would never come.

The inquiry^{*} goes on, and lord Harrington did himself and Burgoyne honour. Barré and governor Johnstone have had warm words, and Burke has been as frantic for the Roman catholics as lord George Gordon against them. The parliament, it is said, is to rise on the 21st.

You will not collect from all this that our prospect clears up. I fear there is not more discretion in the treatment of Ireland than of America.

^{*} Into the conduct of the American war.

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The court seems to be infatuated, and to think that nothing is of any consequence but a majority in parliament—though they have totally lost all power but that of provoking. Fortunate it had been for the king and kingdom, had the court had no majority for these six years! America had still been ours!—and all the lives and all the millions we have squandered! A majority that has lost thirteen provinces by bullying and vapouring, and the most childish menaces, will be a brave countermatch for France and Spain, and a rebellion in Ireland! In short, it is plain that there is nothing a majority in parliament can do, but outvote a minority; and yet by their own accounts one would think they could not do even that. I saw a paper t'other day that began with this Iriscism, "As the minority have lost us thirteen provinces, &c." I know nothing the minority have done, or been suffered to do, but restore the Roman catholic religion—and that too was by the desire of the court.

This is however the present style. They announced with infinite applause a new production of Tickell:—it has appeared, and is a most paltry performance. It is called the *Cassette verte* of M. de Sartine, and pretends to be his correspondence with the opposition. Nay, they are so pitifully mean as to laugh at doctor Franklin, who has such thorough reason to sit and laugh at them. What triumph it must be to him to see a miserable pamphlet all the revenge they can take! There is another, still duller, called *Opposition Mornings*, in which you are lugged in. In truth, it is a compliment to any man to except him out of the number of those that have contributed to the shocking disgraces inflicted on this undone country! When lord Chatham was minister, he never replied to abuse but by a victory.

I know no private news: I have been here ever since Tuesday, enjoying my tranquillity, as much as an honest man can do who sees his country ruined. It is just such a period as makes philosophy wisdom. There are great moments when every man is called on to exert himself—but when folly, infatuation, delusion, incapacity and profligacy fling a nation away, and it concurs itself, and applauds its destroyers, a man who has lent no hand to the mischief, and can neither prevent nor remedy the mass of evils, is fully justified in sitting aloof and beholding the tempest rage, with silent scorn and indignant compassion. Nay, I have, I own, some comfortable reflections.

reflections. I rejoice that there is still a great continent of Englishmen who will remain free and independent, and who laugh at the impotent majorities of a prostitute parliament. I care not whether general Burgoyne and governor Johnstone cross over and figure in, and support or oppose; nor whether Mr. Burke, or the superior of the jesuits, is high commissioner to the kirk of Scotland. My ideas are such as I have always had, and are too plain and simple to comprehend modern confusions; and, therefore, they suit with those of few men. What will be the issue of this chaos, I know not, and, probably, shall not see. I do see with satisfaction, *that what was meditated* has failed by the grossest folly; and when one has escaped the worst, lesser evils must be endured with patience.

After this dull effusion, I will divert you with a story that made me laugh this morning till I cried. You know my Swiss David, and his incomprehensible pronunciation. He came to me, and said, "Auh! dar is meses — wants some of your large flags to put in her great O." With much ado I found out that Mrs. — had sent for leave to take up some flags out of my meadow for her grotto.

I hope in a few days to see lady A — and miss J — here; I have writ to propose it. — What are your intentions? Do you stay till you have made your island impregnable? I doubt it will be our only one that will be so.

LETTER CXVII.

Strawberry-hill, June 16, 1779.

YOUR countess was here last Thursday, and received a letter from you, that told us how slowly you receive ours. When you will receive this I cannot guess; but it dates a new æra, which you with reason did not care to look at as possible. In a word, behold a Spanish war! I must detail a little to increase your wonder. I heard here the day before yesterday that it was likely; and that night received a letter from Paris, telling me (it was of the 6th) that monsieur de Beauveau was going, they knew not whither, at the head of 25,000 men, with three lieutenant-generals and six or eight *maréchaux de camp* under him. Yesterday I went to town, and T. W. happened

to call on me.—He, who used to be informed early, did not believe a word either of a Spanish war or a French expedition. I saw some other persons in the evening as ignorant. At night I went to sup at Richmond-house. The duke said the Breft fleet was certainly failed, and had got the start of ours by twelve days; that monsieur de Beauveau was on board with a large sum of money, and with white and *red* cockades; and that there would certainly be a Spanish war. He added, that the opposition were then pressing in the house of commons to have the parliament continue sitting, and urging to know if we were not at the eve of a Spanish war; but the ministers persisted in the prorogation for to-morrow or Friday, and would not answer on Spain.

I said I would make you wonder——But no—Why should the parliament continue to sit? Are not the ministers and the parliament the same thing? And how has either house shown that it has any talent for war?

The duke of R. does not guess whither the Breft fleet is gone.—He thinks, if to Ireland, we should have known it by this time. He has heard that the prince of Beauveau has said he was going on an expedition that would be glorious in the eyes of posterity.—I asked, if that might not mean Gibraltar? The duke doubts, but hopes it, as he thinks it no wise measure on their side; yet he was very melancholy, as you will be, on this heavy accession to our distresses.

Well! here we are, aris et focus and all at stake! What can we be meaning? Unable to conquer America before she was assisted—scarce able to keep France at bay—are we a match for both, and Spain too?—What can be our view? nay, what can be our expectation? I sometimes think we reckon it will be more creditable to be forced by France and Spain to give up America, than to have the merit with the latter of doing it with grace.—But, as Cato says,

I am weary of conjectures—This must end them;

that is, the sword:—and never, I believe, did a country plunge itself into such difficulties step by step, and for six years together, without once recollecting that each foreign war rendered the object of the civil war more unattainable; and that in both the foreign wars we have not an object in prospect. Unable to recruit our remnant of an army in America, are we to

make conquests on France and Spain? They may choose their attacks: we can scarce choose what we will defend.

Ireland, they say, is more temperate than was expected. That is some consolation—yet many fear the Irish will be tempted to unite with America, which would throw all that trade into their convenient harbours: and I own I have apprehensions that the parliament's rising without taking a step in their favour, may offend them. Surely at least we have courageous ministers. I thought my father a stout man:—he had not a tithe of their spirit.

The town has wound up the season perfectly in character by a fête at the Pantheon by subscription. Le Texier managed it; but it turned out sadly. The company was first shut into the galleries to look down on the supper, then let to descend to it. Afterwards they were led into the subterraneous apartment, which was laid with mould, and planted with trees, and crammed with nosegays: but the fresh earth, and the dead leaves, and the effluvia of breaths made such a stench and moisture, that they were suffocated; and when they remounted, the legs and wings of chickens and remnants of ham (for the supper was not removed) poisoned them more. A druid in an arbour distributed verses to the ladies; then the Baccelli and the dancers of the opera danced; and then danced the company; and then it being morning, and the candles burnt out, the windows were opened; and then the stewed danced assembly were such shocking figures, that they fled like ghosts as they looked.—I suppose there will be no more balls unless the French land, and then we shall show we do not mind it.

Thus I have told you all I know. You will ponder over these things in your little distant island, when we have forgotten them. There is another person, one doctor Franklin, who, I fancy, is not sorry that we divert ourselves so well.

LETTER CXVIII.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 13, 1779.

I AM writing to you at random; not knowing whether or when this letter will go: but your brother told me last night that an officer, whose

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name I have forgot, was arrived from Jersey, and would return to you soon. I am sensible how very seldom I have written to you—but you have been few moments out of my thoughts. What *they* have been, you who know me so minutely may well guess, and why they do not pass my lips. Sense, experience, circumstances, can teach one to command one's self outwardly, but do not divest a most friendly heart of its feelings. I believe the state of my mind has contributed to bring on a very weak and decaying body my present disorders. I have not been well the whole summer; but for these three weeks much otherwise. It has at last ended in the gout, which, to all appearance, will be a short fit.

On public affairs I cannot speak. Every thing is so exaggerated on all sides, that what grains of truth remain in the sieve would appear cold and insipid; and the great manoeuvres you learn as soon as I. In the naval battle between Byron and d'Estaing, our captains were worthy of any age in our story.

You may imagine how happy I am at Mrs. D——'s return, and at her not being at Naples, as she was likely to have been, at the dreadful explosion of Vesuvius. Surely it will have glutted Sir William's rage for volcanos! How poor lady Hamilton's nerves stood it I do not conceive.—Oh, mankind! mankind!—Are there not calamities enough in store for us, but must destruction be our amusement and pursuit?

I send this to Ditton^{*}, where it may wait some days; but I would not suffer a sure opportunity to slip without a line. You are more obliged to me for all I do not say, than for whatever eloquence itself could pen.

P. S. I unseal my letter to add, that undoubtedly you will come to the meeting of parliament, which will be in October. Nothing can or ever did make me advise you to take a step unworthy of yourself.—But surely you have higher and more sacred duties than the government of a molehill!

^{*} Where lord Hertford had then a villa.

LETTER CXIX.

January 3, 1781.

AFTER I had written my note to you last night, I called on ———, who gave me the dismal account of Jamaica, that you will see in the gazette, and of the damage done to our shipping. Admiral Rowley is safe; but they are in apprehensions for Walsingham. He told me too what is not in the gazette; that of the expedition against the Spanish settlements, not a single man survives! The papers to-day, I see, speak of great danger to Gibraltar.

———— repeated to me his great desire that you should publish your speech¹, as he told you. I do not conceive why *he* is so eager for it; for he professes total despair about America. It looks to me as if there was a wish of throwing blame somewhere—but I profess I am too simple to dive into the objects of shades of intrigues; nor do I care about them. We shall be reduced to a miserable little island; and from a mighty empire sink into as insignificant a country as Denmark or Sardinia! When our trade and marine are gone, the latter of which we keep up by unnatural efforts, to which our debt will put a stop, we shall lose the East Indies as Portugal did; and then France will dictate to us more imperiously than ever we did to Ireland, which is in a manner already gone too! These are mortifying reflections, to which an English mind cannot easily accommodate itself—But, alas! we have been pursuing the very conduct that France would have prescribed, and more than with all her presumption she could have dared to expect. Could she flatter herself that we would take no advantage of the dilatoriness and unwillingness of Spain to enter into the war? that we would reject the disposition of Russia to support us? and that our still more natural friend Holland would be driven into the league against us? All this has happened; and, like an infant, we are delighted with having set our own frock in a blaze!—I sit and gaze with astonishment at our phrensy—Yet why? Are not nations as liable to intoxication as individuals? Are not predictions founded on calculation oftener rejected than the prophecies

¹ Introductory of a motion “for leave to bring in a bill for quieting the troubles that have for some time subsisted between Great Britain and America, and enabling his ma-

“jesty to send out commissioners with full power to treat with America for that purpose.”

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of dreamers? Do we not act precisely like C—— F——, who thought he had discovered a new truth in figures, when he preached that wise doctrine, that nobody could want money that would pay enough for it?—The consequence was, that in two years he left himself without the possibility of borrowing a shilling. I am not surprised at the spirits of a boy of parts—I am not surprised at the people—I do wonder at government, that games away its consequence. For what are we now really at war with America, France, Spain, and Holland?—Not with hopes of reconquering America, not with the smallest prospect of conquering a foot of land from France, Spain, or Holland—No; we are at war on the defensive, to protect what is left, or more truly to stave off, for a year perhaps, a peace that must proclaim our nakedness and impotence. I would not willingly recur to that womanish vision of, Something may turn up in our favour! That something must be a naval victory that will annihilate at once all the squadrons of Europe—must wipe off forty millions of new debt—reconcile the affections of America, that for six years we have laboured to alienate—and that must recall out of the grave the armies and sailors that are perished—and that must make thirteen provinces willing to receive the law, without the necessity of keeping ten thousand men amongst them. The gigantic imagination of lord Chatham would not entertain such a chimera. Lord —— perhaps would say he did, rather than not undertake; or Mr. Burke could form a metaphoric vision, that would satisfy no imagination but his own: but I, who am nullius addictus jurare in verba, have no hopes either in our resources or in our geniuses, and look on my country already as undone²!—It is grievous—but I shall not have much time to lament its fall!

LETTER CXX.

Strawberry-hill, Sunday evening, May 6, 1781.

I SUPPED with your countess on Friday at lord Frederic Campbell's, where I heard of the relief of Gibraltar by Darby. The Spanish fleet kept

² It may be some comfort, in a moment no less portentous and melancholy than the one here described, to recollect the almost unhopèd-for recovery of national prosperity, which took place from the peace 1782 to the declaration of war against France in the year 1793. May our exertions procure the speedy application of a similar remedy to our present evils, and may that remedy be productive of equally good effects! E. March 1798.

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close in Cadiz :—however, he lifted up his leg, and just squirted contempt on them. As he is disembarassed of his transports, I suppose their ships will scramble on shore rather than fight. Well, I shall be perfectly content with our fleet coming back in a whole skin. It will be enough to have out-quixoted Don Quixoté's own nation. As I knew your countess would write the next day, I waited till she was gone out of town and would not have much to tell you—not that I have either; and it is giving myself an air, to pretend to know more at Twickenham than she can at Henley. Though it is a bitter north-east, I came hither to-day to look at my lilacs, though à la glace, and to get from Pharaoh, for which there is a rage. I doted on it above thirty years ago; but it is not decent to sit up all night now with boys and girls. —, the banker à la mode, has been demolished. He and his associate fir — — went early t'other night to Brookes's, before C. F. and F. who keep a bank there, were come. But they soon arrived, attacked their rivals, broke their bank, and won above 4000*l*. “There,” said F. “so should all usurpers be served!”—He did still better; for he sent for his tradesmen, and paid as far as the money would go.—In the mornings he continues his war on lord North—but cannot break *that* bank. The court has carried a secret committee for India affairs—and it is supposed that Rumbold is to be the sacrifice:—but as he is near as rich as lord Clive, I conclude he will escape by the same golden key.

I told you in my last, that Tonton¹ was arrived. I brought him this morning to take possession of his new villa; but his inauguration has not been at all pacific. As he has already found out that he may be as despotic as at saint Joseph's, he began with exiling my beautiful little cat;—upon which, however, we shall not quite agree. He then flew at one of my dogs, who returned it, by biting his foot till it bled; but was severely beaten for it. I immediately rung for Margaret² to dress his foot; but in the midst of my tribulation could not keep my countenance; for she cried, “Poor little thing, he does not understand my language!”—I hope she will not recollect too that he is a papist!

¹ Madame du Deffand's dog, which she left by will to Mr. Walpole.

² Mr. Walpole's housekeeper.

Berkeley-square, Tuesday, May 8.

I CAME before dinner, and find your long letter of the 3d. You have mistaken Tonton's sex; who is a cavalier, and a little of the mousquetaire still; but if I do not correct his vivacities, at least I shall not encourage them like my dear old friend.

You say nothing of your health: therefore, I trust, it is quite re-established. My own is most flourishing for me.

They say the parliament will rise by the birth-day—not that it seems to be any grievance or confinement to any body. I hope you will soon come and enjoy a quiet summer under the laurels of your own conscience. They are at least as spreading as any body's else; and the soil will preserve their verdure for ever. Methinks we western powers might as well make peace, since we make war so clumsily.—Yet I doubt the awkwardness of our enemies will not have brought down our stomach. Well, I wish for the sake of mankind there was an end of their sufferings! Even spectators are not amused—the whole war has passed like the riotous murmurs of the upper gallery before the play begins—they have pelted the candle-snuffers, the stage has been swept, the music has played, people have taken their places—but the deuce a bit of any performance!—And when folks go home, they will have seen nothing but a farce, that has cost fifty times more than the best tragedy!

LETTER CXXI.

Berkeley-square, May 28, 1781.

THIS letter, like an embarkation, will not set out till it has gotten its complement; but I begin it, as I have just received your second letter. I wrote to you two days ago, and did not mean to complain; for you certainly cannot have variety of matter in your sequestered isle: and since you do not disdain trifling news, this good town, that furnishes nothing else, at least produces weeds, which shoot up in spite of the *Scotch thistles*, that have choked all good fruits. I do not know what lady C. designs to do with her play; I hope, act it only in private; for her other was mur-

* From Jersey.

dered,

dered, and the audience did not exert the least gallantry to so pretty an authoress, though she gave them so fair an opportunity. For my own play, I was going to publish it in my own defence, as a spurious edition was advertised here, besides one in Ireland.—My advertisement has overlaid the former for the present, and that tempts me to suppress mine, as I have a thorough aversion to its appearance. Still, I think I shall produce it in the dead of summer, that it may be forgotten by winter; for I could not bear having it the subject of conversation in a full town. It is printed; so I can let it steal out in the midst of the first event that engrosses the public; and as it is not quite a novelty, I have no fear but it will be still-born, if it is twin with any babe that squalls and makes much noise.—At the same time with yours I received a letter from another cousin at Paris, who tells me Necker is on the verge; and in the postscript says, he has actually resigned. I heard so a few days ago; but this is a full confirmation. Do you remember a conversation at your house, at supper, in which a friend of yours spoke very unfavourably of Necker, and seemed to wish his fall? In my own opinion, they are much in the wrong. It is true, Necker laboured with all his shoulders to restore their finances; yet I am persuaded that his attention to that great object made him clog all their military operations. They will pay dearer for money; but money they will have—nor is it so dear to them; nor, when they have gotten it, they have only not to pay. A monsieur Joly de Fleury is comptroller-general. I know nothing of him—but as they change so often, some able man will prove minister at last—and there they will have the advantage again.

Lord Cornwallis's courier, Mr. Broderic, is not yet arrived; so you are a little precipitate in thinking America so much nearer to being subdued, which you have often swallowed up as if you were a minister; and yet, methinks, that æra has been so frequently put off, that I wonder you are not cured of being sanguine—or rather, of believing the magnificent lies that every trifling advantage gives birth to. If a quarter of the Americans had joined the royalists, that have been said to join, all the colonies would not hold them. But, at least, they have been like the trick of kings and queens at cards; where one of two goes back every turn to fetch another. However, this is only for conversation for the moment. With such aversion to disputation, I have no zeal for making converts to my own opinion, not even on points that touch me nearer.

Thursday, May 31.

If you see the papers, you will find that there was a warm debate yesterday on a fresh proposal from Harley for pacification with America; in which the ministers were roundly reproached with their boasts of the returning zeal of the colonies; and which, though it ought by their own accounts to be so much nearer complete, they could not maintain to be at all effectual; though even yesterday a report was revived of a second victory of lord Cornwallis. This debate prevented another on the marriage-bill, which C. F. wants to get repealed, and which he told me he was going to labour. I mention this from the circumstance of the moment when he told me so. I had been to see if lady A——— was come to town: as I came up St. James's-street, I saw a cart and porters at C——'s door; coppers and old chests of drawers loading.—In short, his success at Faro has awakened his host of creditors—but unless his bank had swelled to the size of the bank of England, it could not have yielded a sop apiece for each. Epson too had been unpropitious—and one creditor has actually seized and carried off his goods, which did not seem worth removing. As I returned full of this scene, whom should I find sauntering by my own door but C.? He came up and talked to me at the coach-window, on the marriage bill, with as much sangfroid as if he knew nothing of what had happened.—I have no admiration for insensibility to one's own faults, especially when committed out of vanity. Perhaps the whole philosophy consisted in the commission. If *you* could have been as much to blame, the last thing you would bear well would be your own reflections. The more marvellous F——'s parts are, the more one is provoked at his follies, which comfort so many rascals and blockheads; and make all that is admirable and amiable in him, only matter of regret to those who like him as I do.

I did intend to settle at Strawberry on Sunday; but must return on Thursday, for a party made at Marlborough-house for princess Amelia. I am continually tempted to retire entirely—and should—if I did not see how very unfit English tempers are for living quite out of the world. We grow abominably peevish and severe on others, if we are not constantly rubbed against and polished by them. I need not name friends and relations of yours and mine as instances. My prophecy on the short reign of Faro is verified already. The bankers find that all the calculated advantages of the
game

game do not balance pinchbeck parolis and debts of honourable women.—The bankers, I think, might have had a previous and more generous reason, the very bad air of holding a bank:—but this country is as hardened against the petite morale, as against the greater.—What should I think of the world if I quitted it entirely?

L E T T E R CXXII.

Strawberry-hill, June 3, 1781.

YOU know I have more philosophy about *you* than courage; yet for once I have been very brave. There was an article in the papers last week that said, a letter from Jersey mentioned apprehensions of being attacked by 4000 French.—Do you know that I treated the paragraph with scorn?—No, no: I am not afraid for your island, when you are at home in it, and have had time to fortify it, and have sufficient force. No, no: it will not be surpris'd when you are there, and when our fleet is returned, and Digby before Brest.—However, with all my valour, I could not help going to your brother to ask a few questions—but he had heard of no such letter. The French would be foolish indeed if they ran their heads a third time against your rocks, when watched by the most vigilant of all governors. Your nephew G—— is arriv'd with the fleet: my door opened t'other morning; I looked towards the common horizon of heads, but was a foot and a half below any face. The handsomest giant in the world made but one step cross my room; and, seizing my hand, gave it such a robust gripe, that I squall'd; for he crush'd my poor chalk-stones to powder. When I had recovered from the pain of his friendly salute, I said, "It must be G—— C——: and yet is it possible?—Why, it is not fifteen months ago since you was but six feet high."—In a word, he is within an inch of Robert and Edward, with larger limbs, almost as handsome as Hugh, with all the bloom of youth; and—in short, another of those comely sons of Anak, the breed of which your brother and lady Hertford have piously restored for the comfort of the daughters of Sion. He is delighted with having tapped his warfare with the siege of Gibraltar, and burns to stride to America. The town, he says, is totally destroyed; and between two and three hundred persons were killed.—Well! it is pity lady Hertford has done breeding: we shall want such a race to re-people even the ruins we do not lose! The

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rising generation does give one some hopes.—I confine myself to some of this year's birds. The young William Pitt has again displayed paternal oratory. The other day, on the commission of accounts, he answered lord North, and tore him limb from limb. If C. F. could feel, one should think such a rival, with an unspotted character, would rouse him—What, if a Pitt and Fox should again be rivals!—A still newer orator has appeared in the India business, a Mr. Banks, and against lord North too—and with a merit, that the very last crop of orators left out of their rubric—modesty. As young Pitt is modest too, one would hope some genuine English may revive!

Tuesday, June 5.

THIS is the season of opening my cake-house. I have chosen a bad spot, if I meant to retire; and calculated ill, when I made it a puppet-show.

Last week we had two or three mastiff-days; for they were fiercer than our common dog-days. It is cooled again; but rain is as great a rarity as in Egypt; and father Thames is so far from being a Nile, that he is dying for thirst himself.—But it would be prudent to reserve paragraphs of weather till people are gone out of town; for then I can have little to send you else from hence.

Berkeley-square, June 6.

As soon as I came to town to-day Le Texier called on me, and told me he has miscarried of Pygmalion. The expence would have mounted to 150*l.* and he could get but 60 subscribers at a guinea apiece. I am glad his experience and success have taught him thrift—I did not expect it. Sheridan had a heavier miscarriage last night. The two Vestris had imagined a fête; and, concluding that whatever they designed would captivate the town and its purses, were at the expence of 1200*l.* and, distributing tickets at two guineas apiece, disposed of not two hundred. It ended in a bad opera, that began three hours later than usual, and at quadruple the price. There were bushels of dead flowers, lamps, country dances—and a cold supper—Yet they are not abused as poor Le Texier was last year.

June 8.

I CONCLUDE my letter, and I hope our present correspondence, very agreeably; for your brother told me last night, that you have written to lord Hillsborough

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Hillsborough for leave to return. If all our governors could leave their dominions in as good plight, it were lucky. Your brother owned, what the gazette with all its circumstances cannot conceal, that lord Cornwallis's triumphs have but increased our losses, without leaving any hopes. I am told that his army, which when he parted from Clinton amounted to 17,000 men, does not now contain above as many hundred, except the detachments. The gazette, to my sorrow and your greater sorrow, speaks of colonel O'Hara having received two dangerous wounds.

Princess Amelia was at Marlborough-house last night, and played at Faro till twelve o'clock—There ends the winter campaign!—I go to Strawberry-hill to-morrow; and I hope, à l'Irlandoise, that the next letter I write to you—will be not to write to you any more.

LETTER CXXIII.

Strawberry-hill, September 16, 1781.

I AM not surpris'd that such a mind as yours cannot help expressing gratitude: it would not be your mind, if it could command that sensation as triumphantly as it does your passions. Only remember that the expression is unnecessary. I do know that you feel the entire friendship I have for you; nor should I love you so well if I was not persuaded of it. There never was a grain of any thing romantic in my friendship for you. We loved one another from children, and as so near relations; but my friendship grew up with your virtues, which I admired though I did not imitate. We had scarce one in common but disinterestedness. Of the reverse we have both, I may say, been so absolutely clear, that there is nothing so natural and easy as the little moneyed transactions between us; and therefore knowing how perfectly indifferent I am upon that head, and remembering the papers I shewed you, and what I said to you when I saw you last, I am sure you will have the complaisance never to mention thanks more.—Now to answer your questions.

As to coming to you, as that feu gregeois lord George Gordon has

* Now general O'Hara, governor of Gibraltar.

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given up the election to my great joy, I can come to you on Sunday next. It is true, I had rather you visited your regiment first, for this reason: I expect summons to Nuneham every day; and besides, having never loved two journeys instead of one, I grow more covetous of my time, as I have little left, and therefore had rather take Park-place, going and coming, on my way to lord Harcourt.

I don't know a word of news public or private. I am deep in my dear old friend's ¹ papers. There are some very delectable; and though I believe, nay know, I have not quite all, there are many which I almost wonder, after the little delicacy they ² have shown, ever arrived to my hands. I dare to say they will not be quite so just to the public; for though I consented that the correspondence with Voltaire should be given to the editors of his works, I am persuaded that there are many passages at least which they will suppress, as very contemptuous to his chief votaries—I mean of the votaries to his sentiments—for, like other heresiarchs, he despised his tools. If I live to see the edition, it will divert me to collate it with what I have in my hands.

You are the person in the world the fittest to encounter the meeting you mention for the choice of a bridge ³. You have temper and patience enough to bear with fools and false taste. I, so unlike you, have learnt some patience with both sorts too, but by a more summary method than by waiting to instill reason into them. Mine is only by leaving them to their own vagaries, and by despairing that sense and taste should ever extend themselves. Adieu!

P. S. In Voltaire's letters are some bitter traits on the king of Prussia, which, as he is defender of their no faith, I conclude will be rayés too.

¹ Madame du Deffand, who died in September 1781, and left all her papers to Mr. Walpole.

² He means the executors of madame du Deffand.

³ The bridge over the Thames at Henley, to whose singular beauty the good taste of Mr. Conway materially contributed.

LETTER CXXIV.

Berkeley-square, Sunday morning, November 18, 1781.

I HAVE been here again for three days, tending and nursing and waiting on Mr. Jephson's play. I have brought it into the world, was well delivered of it, it can stand on its own legs—and I am going back to my own quiet hill, never likely to have any thing more to do with theatres. Indeed it has seemed strange to me, who for these three or four years have not been so many times in a play-house, nor knew fix of the actors by sight, to be at two rehearsals, behind the scenes, in the green-room, and acquainted with half the company. The Count of Narbonne was played last night with great applause, and without a single murmur of disapprobation. Miss Young has charmed me. She played with intelligence that was quite surprising. The applause to one of her speeches lasted a minute, and recommenced twice before the play could go on. I am sure you will be pleased with the conduct and the easy beautiful language of the play, and struck with her acting.

LETTER CXXV.

Strawberry-hill, September 17, 1782.

I HAD not time yesterday to say what I had to say about your coming hither. I should certainly be happy to see you and lady Ailesbury at any time; but it would be unconscionable to expect it when you have scarce a whole day in a month to pass at your own house, and to look after your own works. Friends, I know, lay as great stress upon trifles as upon serious points; but as there never was a more sincere attachment than mine, so it is the most reasonable one too, for I always think for you more than myself. Do whatever you have to do, and be assured, That is what I like best that you should do. The present hurry cannot last always. Your present object is to show how much more fit you are for your post^{*} than

^{*} Mr. Conway was now commander in chief.

any

any other man, by which you will do infinite service too; and will throw a great many private acts of good-nature and justice into the account. Do you think I would stand in the way of any of these things? and that I am not aware of them? Do not think about me. If it suits you at any moment, come. Except Sunday next, when I am engaged to dine abroad, I have nothing to do till the middle of October, when I shall go to Nuneham; and, going or coming, may possibly catch you at Park-place.

If I am not quite credulous about your turning smoke into gold^{*}, it is perhaps because I am very ignorant. I like Mr. M—— extremely; and though I have lived so long that I have little confidence, I think you could not have chosen one more likely to be faithful. I am sensible that my kind of distrust would prevent all great enterprises—and yet I cannot but fear, that unless one gives one's self up entirely to the pursuit of a new object, the risk must be doubled. But I will say no more; for I do not even wish to dissuade you, as I am sure I understand nothing of the matter, and therefore mean no more than to keep your discretion awake.

The tempest of Monday night alarmed me too for the fleet: and as I have nothing to do but to care, I feel for individuals as well as for the public; and think of all those who may be lost, and of all those who may be made miserable by such loss. Indeed I care most for individuals—for as to the public, it seems to be totally insensible to every thing!

I know nothing worth repeating; and having now answered all your letter, shall bid you good night.

L E T T E R CXXVI.

Strawberry-hill, August 15, 1783.

THE address from the volunteers is curious indeed, and upon the first face a little Irish. What! would they throw off our parliament, and yet

^{*} Alluding to the coke ovens, for which Mr. Conway afterwards obtained a patent.

amend it? It is like correcting a question in the house of commons, and then voting against it. But I suppose they rather mean to increase confusion here, that we may not be at leisure to impede their progress—at least this may be the intention of the leaders. Large bodies are only led by being in earnest themselves, when their leaders are not so:—but my head is not clear enough to apply it to different matters—nor could I do any good if it were. Our whole system is become a disjointed chaos—and time must digest it—or blow it up shortly.—I see no way into it—nor expect any thing favourable but from chance, that often stops confusion on a sudden. To restore us by any system, it would require a single head furnished with wisdom, temper, address, fortitude, full and undivided power, and sincere patriotism divested of all personal views. Where is that prodigy to be found?—and how should it have the power, if it had all the rest? And if it had the power, how could it be divested of that power again? And if it were not, how long would it retain its virtues? Power and wisdom would soon unite, like Antony and Augustus, to annihilate their colleague virtue, for being a poor creature like Lepidus. In short, the mass of matter is too big for me: I am going out of the world, and cannot trouble myself about it. I do think of your part in it, and wish to preserve you where you are, for the benefits that you may contribute. I have a high opinion of Mr. F. and believe that by frankness you may become real friends; which would be greatly advantageous to the country. There is no competition in my mind where you are concerned: but F. is the minister with whom I most wish you united—indeed, to all the rest I am indifferent or adverse—but, besides his superior abilities, he has a liberality of acting that is to my taste. It is like my father's plainness, and has none of the paltry little finesses of a statesman.

Your parties do not tempt me, because I am not well enough to join in them: nor yet will they stop me, though I had rather find only you and lady A. and Mrs. D. I am not seriously ill—nay, am better upon the whole than I was last year: but I perceive decays enough in myself to be sensible that the scale may easily be inclined to the worst side. This observation makes me very indifferent to every thing that is not much at my heart. Consequently what concerns you is, as it has always been for above forty years, a principal object. Adieu!

LETTER CXXVII.

Berkeley-square, Wednesday, May 5, 1784.

YOUR cherries, for aught I know, may, like Mr. Pitt, be half ripe before others are in blossom; but at Twickenham, I am sure, I could find dates and pomegranates on the quickset hedges, as soon as a cherry in swaddling-clothes on my walls. The very leaves on the horse-chestnuts are little snotty-nosed things, that cry and are afraid of the north-wind, and cling to the bough as if *old poker* was coming to take them away. For my part, I have seen nothing like spring but a chimney-sweeper's garland; and yet I have been three days in the country—and the consequence was, that I was glad to come back to town. I do not wonder that you feel differently. Any thing is warmth and verdure when compared to poring over memorials. In truth, I think you will be much happier for being out of parliament. You could do no good there; you have no views of ambition to satisfy:—and when neither duty nor ambition calls (I do not condescend to name avarice, which never is to be satisfied, nor deserves to be reasoned with, nor has any place in your breast) I cannot conceive what satisfaction an elderly man can have in listening to the passions or follies of others: nor is eloquence such a banquet, when one knows that, whoever the cooks are, whatever the fauces, one has eaten as good beef or mutton before—and, perhaps, as well dressed. It is surely time to live for one's self, when one has not a vast while to live; and you, I am persuaded, will live the longer for leading a country life. How much better to be planting, nay, making experiments on smoke (if not too dear), than reading applications from officers, a quarter of whom you could not serve, nor content three quarters! You had not time for necessary exercise; and, I believe, would have blinded yourself. In short, if you will live in the air all day, be totally idle, and not read or write a line by candle-light, and retrench your suppers, I shall rejoice in your having nothing to do but that dreadful punishment, pleasing yourself. Nobody has any claims on you; you have satisfied every point of honour; you have no cause for being particularly grateful to the opposition; and you want no excuse for living for yourself. Your resolutions on œconomy are not only prudent, but just—and, to say the truth, I believe that if you had continued at the head of the army you would have ruined yourself. You have too much gene-

rosity

rosity to have curbed yourself, and would have had too little time to attend to doing so. I know by myself how pleasant it is to have laid up a little for those I love, for those that depend on me, and for old servants. Moderate wishes may be satisfied—and, which is still better, are less liable to disappointment. I am not preaching, nor giving advice—but congratulating you:—and it is certainly not being selfish, when I rejoice at your being thrown by circumstances into a retired life, though it will occasion my seeing less of you. But I have always preferred what was most for your own honour and happiness; and as you taste satisfaction already, it will not diminish, for they are the first moments of passing from a busy life to a quiet one that are the most irksome. You have the felicity of being able to amuse yourself with what the grave world calls trifles—but as gravity does not happen to be wisdom, trifles are full as important as what is respected as serious; and more amiable, as generally more innocent. Most men are bad or ridiculous, sometimes both:—at least my experience tells me, what my reading had told me before, that they are so in a great capital of a sinking country. If immortal fame is his object, a Cato may die—but he will do no good. If only the preservation of his virtue had been his point, he might have lived comfortably at Athens, like Atticus—who, by the way, happens to be as immortal; though I will give him credit for having had no such view. Indeed, I look on this country as so irrecoverably on the verge of ruin, from its enormous debt, from the loss of America, from the almost as certain prospect of losing India, that my pride would dislike to be an actor when the crash may happen.

You seem to think that I might send you more news. So I might, if I would talk of elections: but those, you know, I hate; as, in general, I do all details. How Mr. Fox has recovered such a majority I do not guess; still less do I comprehend how there could be so many that had not voted, after the poll had lasted so long. Indeed, I should be sorry to understand such mysteries.—Of new peers, or new elevations, I hear every day, but am quite ignorant which are to be true. Rumour always creates as many as the king, when he makes several. In fact, I do know nothing.

Adieu!

P. S. The summer is come to town, but I hope is gone into the country too.

LETTER CXXVIII.

Strawberry-hill, May 21, 1784.

I AM perfectly satisfied with your epitaph^{*}, and would not have a syllable altered. It tells exactly what it means to say, and, that truth being an encomium, wants no addition or amplification. Nor do I love late language for modern facts, nor will European tongues perish since printing has been discovered. I should approve French least of all. It would be a kind of insult to the vanquished: and besides, the example of a hero should be held out to his countrymen rather than to their enemies. You must take care to have the word *caused*, in the last line but one, spelt rightly, and not *caus'd*.

I know nothing of the parliament but what you saw in the papers. I came hither yesterday, and am transported, like you, with the beauty of the country; aye, and with its perfumed air too. The *lilac-tide* scents even the insides of the rooms.

I desired lady A—— to carry you lord Melcombe's Diary. It is curious indeed, not so much from the secrets it blabs, which are rather characteristic than novel, but from the wonderful folly of the author, who was so fond of talking of himself, that he tells all he knew of himself, though scarce an event that does not betray his profligacy; and (which is still more surprising that he should disclose) almost every one exposes the contempt in which he was held, and his consequential disappointments and disgraces!—Was ever any man the better for another's experience?—What a lesson is here against versatility!

I, who have lived through all the scenes unfolded, am entertained—but I should think that to younger readers half the book must be unintelligible. He explains nothing but the circumstances of his own situation; and though he touches on many important periods, he leaves them undeveloped, and often undetermined. It is diverting to hear him rail at lord Halifax and others, for the very kind of double-dealing which he relates coolly of himself in the next page. Had he gone backwards, he might

* An epitaph for the monument, erected by the States of Jersey, to the memory of major Pearson, killed in the attack of that island by the French, in January 1781.

have given half-a-dozen volumes of his own life with similar anecdotes and variations.

I am most surprised, that when self-love is the whole ground-work of the performance, there should be little or no attempt at shining as an author, though he was one. As he had so much wit too, I am amazed that not a feature of it appears. The discussion in the Appendix, on the late prince's question for increase of allowance, is the only part in which there is sense or honesty.

There is, in the imperfect account of Rochfort, a strong circumstance or two that pleased me much. There are many passages that will displease several others throughout.

Mr. Coxe's Travels are very different: plain, clear, sensible, instructive, and entertaining. It is a noble work, and precious to me who delight in quartos: the two volumes contain twelve hundred pages—I have already devoured a quarter, though I have had them but three days.

[The rest of this letter is lost.]

LETTER CXXIX.

Strawberry-hill, June 25, 1784.

I CAN answer you very readily in your own tone, that is, about weather and country grievances, and without one word of news or politics; for I know neither, nor enquire of them. I am very well content to be a Strulbrug, and to *exist* after I have done *being*: and I am still better pleased that you are in the same way of thinking, or of not thinking; for I am sure both your health and your mind will find the benefits of living for yourself and family only. It were not fit that the young should concentrate themselves in so narrow a circle—nor do the young seem to have any such intention. Let them mend or mar the world as they please—the world takes its own way upon the whole; and though there may be an uncommon swarm of animalculæ for a season, things return into their own channel from their own bias, before any effectual nostrum of fumigation is discovered. In the mean time I am for giving all due weight to

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to local grievances, though with no natural turn towards attending to them:—but they serve for conversation. We have no newly-invented grubs to eat our fruit—indeed I have no fruit to be eaten—but I should not lament if the worms would eat my gardener, who, you know, is so bad an one, that I never have any thing in my garden. I am now waiting for dry weather to cut my hay—though nature certainly never intended hay should be cut dry, as it always rains all June.—But here is a worse calamity: one is never safe by day or night: Mrs. Walsingham, who has bought your brother's late house at Ditton, was robbed a few days ago in the high road, within a mile of home, at seven in the evening. The *diminorum gentium* pilfer every thing. Last night they stole a couple of yards of lead off the pediment of the door of my cottage. A gentleman at Putney, who has three men servants, had his house broken open last week, and lost some fine miniatures, which he valued so much, that he would not hang them up. You may imagine what a pain this gives me in my bawbles! I have been making the round of my fortifications this morning, and ordering new works.

I am concerned for the account you give me of ———. Life does not appear to be such a jewel as to preserve it carefully for its own sake. I think the same of its *good things*: if they do not procure amusement or comfort, I doubt they only produce the contrary.—Yet it is silly to refine; for, probably, whatever any man does by choice, he knows will please him best, or at least will prevent greater uneasiness. I, therefore, rather retract my concern; for with a vast fortune ——— might certainly do what he would—and if, at his age, he can wish for more than that fortune will obtain, I may pity his taste or temper: but I shall think that you and I are much happier who can find enjoyments in an humbler sphere, nor envy those who have no time for trifling. I, who have never done any thing else, am not at all weary of my occupation. Even three days of continued rain have not put me out of humour or spirits. *C'est beaucoup dire* for an Anglois. Adieu!

LETTER

LETTER CXXX.

Strawberry-hill, June 30, 1784.

INSTEAD of coming to you, I am thinking of packing up and going to town for winter, so desperate is the weather! I found a great fire at Mrs. Clive's this evening, and Mr. Raftor hanging over it like a smoked ham. They tell me my hay will be all spoiled for want of cutting; but I had rather it should be destroyed by standing than by being mowed, as the former will cost me nothing but the crop, and 'tis very dear to make nothing but a water fouchy of it.

You know I have lost a niece, and found another nephew: he makes the fifty-fourth, reckoning both sexes. We are certainly an affectionate family, for of late we do nothing but marry one another.

Have not you felt a little twinge in a remote corner of your heart on lady ——'s death? She dreaded death so extremely, that I am glad she had not a moment to be sensible of it. I have a great affection for sudden deaths—They save one's self and every body else a deal of ceremony.

The duke and duchess of M—— breakfasted here on Monday, and seemed much pleased, though it rained the whole time with an Egyptian darkness. I should have thought there had been deluges enough to destroy all Egypt's other plagues; but the newspapers talk of locusts—I suppose, relations of your beetles, though probably not so fond of green fruit; for the scene of their campaign is Queen-square, Westminster, where there certainly has not been an orchard since the reign of Canute.

I have, at last, seen an air balloon—just as I once did see a tiny review, by passing one accidentally on Hounslow-heath. I was going last night to lady Onflow at Richmond, and over Mr. Cambridge's field I saw a bundle in the air not bigger than the moon, and she herself could not have descended with more composure if she had expected to find Endymion fast asleep. It seemed to 'light on Richmond-hill; but Mrs. H—— was going by, and her coiffeure prevented my seeing it alight. The papers say, that a balloon has been made at Paris, representing the castle of Stockholm, in compliment to the king of Sweden, but that they were afraid to let

let it off—So, I suppose, it will be served up to him in a dessert. No great progress surely is made in these airy navigations, if they are still afraid of risking the necks of two or three subjects for the entertainment of a visiting sovereign. There is seldom a *feu de joie* for the birth of a dauphin that does not cost more lives. I thought royalty and science never haggled about the value of blood when experiments are in question.

I shall wait for summer before I make you a visit. Though I dare to say that you have converted your smoke-kilns into a manufacture of balloons, pray do not erect a Strawberry castle in the air for my reception, if it will cost a pismire a hair of its head. Good-night!—I have ordered my bed to be heated as hot as an oven, and Tonton and I must go into it.

LETTER CXXXI.

Strawberry-hill, August 14, 1784.

AS lady C. offers to be postman, I cannot resist writing a line, though I have not a word to say. In good sooth, I know nothing, hear of nothing but robberies and house-breaking; consequently never think of ministers, India directors, and such honest men. Mrs. Clive has been broken open, and Mr. Rastor miscarried and died of the fright. Lady ——— has lost all her liveries and her temper, and lady ——— has cried her eyes out on losing a lurch and almost her wig.—In short, as I do not love exaggeration, I do not believe there have been above threescore highway robberies within this week, fifty-seven houses that have been broken open, and two hundred and thirty that are to be stripped on the first opportunity. We are in great hopes, however, that the king of Spain, now he has demolished Algiers, the metropolitan see of thieves, will come and bombard Richmond, Twickenham, Hampton-court, and all the suffragan cities that swarm with pirates and banditti, as he has a better knack at destroying vagabonds than at recovering his own.

Ireland is in a blessed way; and as if the climate infected every body that sets foot there, the viceroy's aides de camp have blundered into a riot, that will set all the humours afloat.

I wish

I wish you joy of the summer being come now it is gone, which is better than not coming at all. I hope lady C. will return with an account of your all being perfectly well. Adieu!

LETTER CXXXII.

Strawberry-hill, October 15, 1784.

AS I have heard nothing from you, I flatter myself lady A. mends, or I think you would have brought her again to the physicians: you will, I conclude, next week, as towards the end of it the ten days they named will be expired. I must be in town myself about Thursday on some little business of my own.

As I was writing this, my servants called me away to see a balloon—I suppose Blanchard's, that was to be let off from Chelsea this morning. I saw it from the common field before the window of my round tower. It appeared about a third of the size of the moon, or less, when setting, something above the tops of the trees on the level horizon. It was then descending; and after rising and declining a little, it sunk slowly behind the trees, I should think about or beyond Sunbury, at five minutes after one. But you know I am a very inexact guesser at measures and distances, and may be mistaken in many miles; and you know how little I have attended to those *airgonauts*: only t'other night I diverted myself with a sort of meditation on future *airgonation*, supposing that it will not only be perfected, but will depose navigation. I did not finish it, because I am not skilled, like the gentleman that used to write political ship-news, in that style, which I wanted to perfect my essay: but in the prelude I observed how ignorant the ancients were in supposing Icarus melted the wax of his wings by too near access to the sun; whereas he would have been frozen to death before he made the first post on that road. Next, I discovered an alliance between bishop Wilkins's art of flying and his plan of an universal language, the latter of which he no doubt calculated to prevent the want of an interpreter when he should arrive at the moon.

But I chiefly amused myself with ideas of the change that would be made in the world by the substitution of balloons to ships. I supposed our sea-

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ports to become *deserted villages*, and Salisbury-plain, Newmarket-heath, (another canvas for alteration of ideas), and all downs (but *the Downs*) arising into dock-yards for aërial vessels. Such a field would be ample in furnishing new speculations——But to come to my ship-news.

The good balloon Dædalus, capt. Wing-ate, will fly in a few days for China; he will stop at the top of the Monument to take in passengers.

Arrived on Brand-fands, the Vulture, capt. Nabob; the Tortoise snow, from Lapland; the Pet-en-l'air, from Versailles; the Dreadnought, from mount Etna, fir W. Hamilton commander; the Tympany, Mongolfier; and the Mine-A-in-a-bandbox, from the cape of Good Hope. Foundered in a hurricane, the Bird of Paradise, from mount Ararat. The Bubble, Sheldon, took fire, and was burnt to her gallery; and the Phoenix is to be cut down to a second rate.—In those days Old Sarum will again be a town and have houses in it. There will be fights in the air with wind-guns and bows and arrows; and there will be prodigious increase of land for tillage, especially in France, by breaking up all public roads as useless.—But enough of my fooleries, for which I am sorry you must pay double postage.

LETTER CXXXIII.

Sunday night, Nov. 28, 1784.

I HAVE received the parcel of papers you sent me; which I conclude come from lord Strafford, and will apply them as well as I possibly can, you may be sure—but with little of doing any good: humanity is no match for cruelty. There are now and then such angelic beings as Mr. Hanway and Mr. Howard; but our race in general is pestilently bad and malevolent. I have been these two years wishing to promote my excellent Mr. Porter's plan for alleviating the woes of chimney-sweepers, but never could make impression on three people; on the contrary, have generally caused a smile.

G——C——'s intelligence of hostilities commenced between the Dutch

Against cruelty to dogs.

and Imperialists makes me suppose that France will support the former—or could they resist? Yet I had heard that France would not. Some have thought, as I have done, that a combination of partition would happen between Austria, France, and Prussia, the modern law of nations for avoiding wars. I know nothing: so my conjectures may all be erroneous; especially as one argues from reason; a very inadequate judge, as it leaves passions, caprices, and accidents, out of its calculation. It does not seem the interest of France, that the emperor's power should increase in their neighbourhood and extend to the sea. Consequently it is France's interest to protect Holland in concert with Prussia. This last is a transient power, and may determine on the death of the present king; but the Imperial is a permanent force, and must be the enemy of France, however present connections may incline the scale.

In any case, I hope we shall no way be hooked into the quarrel; not only from the impotence of our circumstances, but as I think it would decide the loss of Ireland, which seems tranquillizing: but should we have any bickering with France, she would renew the manœuvres she practised so fatally in America. These are my politics; I do not know with whose they coincide or disagree, nor does it signify a straw. Nothing will depend on my opinion; nor have I any opinion about them, but when I have nothing at all to do that amuses me more, or nothing else to fill a letter.

I can give you a sample of my idleness, which may divert lady A—— and your academy of arts and sciences for a minute in the evening. It came into my head yesterday to send a card to lady Lyttelton, to ask when she would be in town—here it is in an heroic epistle:

From a castle as vast—as the castles on signs;
 From a hill that all Africa's—mole-hills outshines,
 This epistle is sent to a cottage so small,
 That the door cannot ope, if you stand in the hall,
 To a lady, who would be fifteen, if her knight
 And old swain were as young as Methusalem quite:
 It comes to inquire—not whether her eyes
 Are as radiant as ever—but how many sighs
 He must vent to the rocks and the echos around,
 (Though nor echo nor rock in the parish is found)

H h 2

Before

— Before she obdurate his passion will meet—
His passion to see her in Portugal-street.

As the sixth line goes rather too near the core, do not give a copy of it: however, I should be sorry if it displeased; though I do not believe it will, but be taken with good-humour as it was meant.

LETTER CXXXIV.

Strawberry-hill, October 6, 1785.

I WONDERED I did not hear from you, as I concluded you returned. You have made me good amends by the entertaining story of your travels. If I were not too disjointed for long journeys, I should like to see much of what you have seen; but if I had the agility of Vestris, I would not purchase all that pleasure for my eyes at the expence of my unsociability, which could not have borne the hospitality you experienced. It was always death to me, when I did travel England, to have lords and ladies receive me and shew me their castles, instead of turning me over to their house-keeper: it hindered my seeing any thing, and I was the whole time meditating my escape: but lady A. and you are not such sensitive plants, nor shrink and close up if a stranger holds out a hand.

I don't wonder you was disappointed with Jarvis's windows at New College: I had foretold their miscarriage: the old and the new are as mismatched as an orange and a lemon, and destroy each other; nor is there room enough to retire back and see half of the new; and fir Joshua's washy Virtues make the Nativity a dark spot from the darkness of the Shepherds, which happened, as I knew it would, from most of Jarvis's colours not being transparent.

It was taken in perfect good humour; and she returned the following answer, which Mr. Walpole owned was better than his address: E.

Remember'd (tho' old) by a wit and a beau!
I shall fancy, ere long, I'm a Ninon l'Enclos.
I must feel impatient such kindness to meet,
And shall hasten my flight into Portugal-street.

Ripley cottage, 28th Nov.

I

I have

I have not seen the improvements at Blenheim. I used to think it one of the ugliest places in England; a giant's castle who had laid waste all the country round him. Every body now allows the merit of Brown's achievements there.

Of all your survey I wish most to see Beau Desert. Warwick-castle, and Stowe, I know by heart:—the first I had rather possess than any seat upon earth—not that I think it the most beautiful of all, though charming, because I am so intimate with all its proprietors for the last thousand years.

I have often and often studied the new plan of Stowe: it is pompous; but though the wings are altered, they are not lengthened. Though three parts of the edifices in the garden are bad, they enrich that insipid country, and the vastness pleases me more than I can defend.

I rejoice that your jaunt has been serviceable to lady A. The *charming-man*¹ is actually with me; but neither he nor I can keep our promise incontinently. He expects two sons of his brother sir William, whom he is to pack up and send to the Peres de l'Oratoire at Paris. I expect lord and lady W. to-morrow, who are to pass a few days with me: but both the *charming-man* and I will be with you soon. I have no objection to a wintry visit: as I can neither ride nor walk, it is more comfortable when most of my time is passed within doors. If I continue perfectly well, as I am, I shall not settle in town till after Christmas: there will not be half a dozen persons there for whom I care a straw.

I know nothing at all. The peace between the Austrian harpy and the frogs is made. They were stout, and preferred being gobbled to parting with their money. At last, France offered to pay the money for them. The harpy blushed—for the first time—and would not take it, but signed the peace—and will plunder somebody else.

Have you got Boswell's most absurd enormous book?—The best thing in it is a bon mot of lord Pembroke. The more one learns of Johnson, the more preposterous assemblage he appears of strong sense, of the lowest

¹ Edward Jerminham, esq.

bigotry,

bigotry and prejudices, of pride, brutality, fretfulness, and vanity—and Boswell is the ape of most of his faults, without a grain of his sense. It is the story of a mountebank and his zany.

I forgot to say, that I wonder how, with your turn and knowledge and enterprise in scientific exploits, you came not to visit the duke of Bridgewater's operations—or did you omit them, because I should not have understood a word you told me? Adieu!

L E T T E R CXXXV.

Sunday night, June 18, 1786.

I SUPPOSE you have been swearing at the east wind for parching your verdure, and are now weeping for the rain that drowns your hay. I have these calamities in common, and my constant and particular one, people that come to see my house, which unfortunately is more in request than ever. Already I have had twenty-eight sets, have five more tickets given out, and yesterday before I had dined three German barons came. My house is a torment, not a comfort!

I was sent for again to dine at Gunnersbury on Friday, and was forced to send to town for a dress-coat and a sword. There were the prince of Wales, the prince of Mecklenburg, the duke of Portland, lord Clanbrassil, lord and lady Clermont, lord and lady Southampton, lord Pelham, and Mrs. Howe. The prince of Mecklenburg went back to Windsor after coffee; and the prince and lord and lady Clermont to town after tea to hear some new French players at lady William Gordon's. The princess, lady Barrymore, and the rest of us, played three pools at commerce till ten. I am afraid I was tired and gaped. While we were at the dairy, the princess insisted on my making some verses on Gunnersbury. I pleaded being superannuated. She would not excuse me. I promised she should have an ode on her next birth-day; which diverted the prince—but all would not do—So, as I came home, I made the following stanzas, and sent them to her breakfast next morning:

L. In

I.

In deathless odes for ever green
Augustus' laurels blow ;
Nor e'er was grateful duty seen
In warmer strains to flow.

II.

Oh ! why is Flaccus not alive
Your fav'rite scene to sing ?
To Gunnersbury's charms could give
His lyre immortal spring.

III.

As warm as his my zeal for you,
Great princess, could I show it :
But though you have a Horace too—
Ah, madam, he's no poet.

If they are but poor verses, consider I am sixty-nine, was half asleep, and made them almost extempore—and by command ! However, they succeeded, and I received this gracious answer :

“ I wish I had a name that could answer your pretty verses. Your yawning yesterday opened your vein for pleasing me ; and I return you my thanks, my good Mr. Walpole, and remain sincerely your friend,

AMELIA.”

I think this is very genteel at seventy-five.

Do you know that I have bought the Jupiter Serapis as well as the Julio Clovio ! Mr. ——— affures me he has seen six of the hand, and not one of them so fine or so well preserved. I am glad sir Joshua Reynolds saw no more excellence in the Jupiter than in the Clovio ; or the duke of Portland, I suppose, would have purchased it, as he has the vase for a thousand pounds. I would not change. I told sir W. Hamilton and the late duchess, when I never thought it would be mine, that I had rather have the head than the vase. I shall long for Mrs. D—— to make a bust to it,

* At the sale of the duchess dowager of Portland.

and

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and then it will be still more valuable. I have deposited both the Illumination and the Jupiter in lady Di's cabinet¹, which is worthy of them—And here my collection winds up—I will not purchase trumpery after such jewels. Besides, every thing is much dearer in old age, as one has less time to enjoy. Good-night!

LETTER CXXXVI.

Strawberry-hill, October 29, 1786.

I WAS sorry not to be apprised of your intention of going to town, where I would have met you; but I knew it too late, both as I was engaged, and as you was to return so soon. I mean to come to Park-place in a week or fortnight: but I should like to know what company you expect, or do not expect; for I had rather fill up your vacancies, than be a supernumerary.

Lady O—— has sent me two charades made by col. F——: the first she says is very easy, the second very difficult. I have not come within sight of the easy one; and though I have a guess at the other, I do not believe I am right; and so I send them to you, who are master-general of the Œdipuses.

The first, that is so easy:

In concert, song, or serenade,
My first requires my second's aid.
To those residing near the pole
I would not recommend my whole.

The two last lines, I conclude, neither connect with the two first, nor will help one to decyphering them.

The difficult one:

Charades of all things are the worst,
But yet my best have been my first.
Who with my second are concern'd
Will to despise my whole have learn'd.

¹ A cabinet at Strawberry-hill, ornamented with drawings by lady Diana Beauclerc.

This

TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY. 241

This sounds like a good one, and therefore I will not tell you my solution; for, if it is wrong, it might lead you astray; and if it is right, it would prove the charade is not a good one.

Had I any thing better, I would not send you charades, unless for the name of the author.

I have had a letter from your brother, who tells me that he has his grandson S—— with him, who is a prodigy.—I say to myself,

—Prodigies are grown so frequent,
That they have lost their name——

I have seen prodigies in plenty of late—aye, and formerly too—but, divine as they have all been, each has had a mortal heel, and has trodden back a vast deal of their celestial path! I beg to be excused from any more credulity.

I am sorry you have lost your fac-totum ——: I suppose he had discovered that he was too necessary to you. Every day cures one of reliance on others; and we acquire a prodigious stock of experience by the time that we shall cease to have occasion for any. Well! I am not clear, but making or solving charades is as wise as any thing we can do. I should pardon professed philosophers, if they would allow that their wisdom is only trifling, instead of calling their trifling, wisdom. Adieu!

L E T T E R CXXXVII.

Strawberry-hill, June 17, 1787.

I HAVE very little to tell you since we met but disappointments, and those of no great consequence.

On Friday night lady P—— wrote to me that princess Lubomirski was to dine with her the next day, and desired to come in the morning to see Strawberry.—Well, my castle put on its robes, breakfast was prepared, and I shoved another company out of the house, who had a ticket for seeing it. The fun shone, my hay was cocked, we looked divinely—and at half an hour after two nobody came but a servant from lady P——, to say her

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Polish altitude had sent her word she had another engagement in town that would keep her too late :—so lady P——'s dinner was added ; and we had nothing to do, but, like good christians, if we chose it, to compel every body on the road, whether they chose it or not, to come in and eat our soup and biscuits. Methinks this *liberum veto* was rather impertinent, and I begin to think that the partition of Poland was very right.

Your brother has sent me a card for a ball on Monday, but I have excused myself. I have not yet compassed the whole circuit of my own garden, and I have had an inflammation in one of my eyes, and don't think I look as well as my house and my verdure ; and had rather see my hay-cocks, than the duchess of Polignac and madame Lubomirski. *The way to keep him*¹ had the way to get me, and I could crawl to it, because I had an inclination ; but I have a great command of myself when I have no mind to do any thing. Lady Constant was worth an hundred *acs* and *irskis*.

Let me hear of you when you have nothing else to do ; though I suppose you have as little to tell as you see I had.

L E T T E R. CXXXVIII.

Berkeley-square, Nov. 11, 1787.

FROM violent contrary winds², and by your letter going to Strawberry-hill, whence I was come, I have but just received it, and perhaps shall only be able to answer it by snatches, being up to the chin in nephews and nieces.
* * * *

I find you knew nothing of the pacification when you wrote. When I saw your letter, I hoped it would tell me you was coming back, as your island is as safe as if it was situated in the Pacific Ocean, or at least as islands there used to be, till sir Joseph Banks chose to *put them up*. I sent you the good news on the very day before you wrote, though I imagined you would learn it by earlier intelligence. Well, I enjoy both your safety and your great success, which is enhanced by its being owing to your character and

¹ The first comedy represented at the theatre in Richmond-house.

² Mr. Conway was now in Jersey.

abilities. I hope the latter will be allowed to operate by those who have not quite so much of either.

I shall be wonderful glad to see little master Stonehenge¹ at Park-place: it will look in character there; but your own bridge is so stupendous in comparison, that hereafter the latter will be thought to have been a work of the Romans. Dr. Stukeley will burst his cerements to offer mistletoe in your temple—and Mason, on the contrary, will die of vexation and spite that he cannot have Caractacus acted on the spot—Peace to all such!—

—— but were there one whose fires
True Genius kindles, and fair Fame inspires,

he would immortalize you, for all you have been carrying on in Jersey, and for all you shall carry off. Inigo Jones, or Charlton, or somebody, I forget who, called Stonehenge chorea gigantum—this will be the chorea of the pigmies—and as I forget too what is Latin for Lilliputians, I will make a bad pun, and say,

—— portantur avari
Pigmalionis opes——

Pygmalion is as well-founding a name for such a monarch as Oberon.— Pray do not disappoint me, but transport the cathedral² of your island to your domain on our *continent*. I figure unborn antiquaries making pilgrimages to visit your bridge, your daughter's bridge³, and the druidic temple; and if I were not too old to have any imagination left, I would add a sequel to *Mi Li*⁴. Adieu!

¹ Mr. Walpole thus calls the small druidic temple discovered in Jersey, which the states of that island had presented to their governor general Conway to be transported to and erected at Park-place, with the following inscription: E

Pour des siècles caché aux regards des mortels,
Cet ancien monument, ces pierres, ces autels,
Où le sang des humains offert en sacrifice
Ruissela pour des dieux qu'enfanta le caprice;
Ce monument sans prix par son antiquité
Temoignera pour nous à la postérité,
Que dans tous les dangers Césarine eût un père
Attentif et vaillant, généreux et prospère,

Et redira CONWAY, aux siècles à venir,
Qu'en vertu du respect dû à ce souvenir,
Elle te fit ce don acquis à ta vaillance
Comme un juste tribut de sa reconnaissance.

² The druidic temple.

³ The key stones of the centre arch of the bridge at Henley are ornamented with heads of the Thames and Isis, designed by the hon. Mrs. Damer, and executed by her in Portland stone. E.

⁴ One of the Hieroglyphic Tales, containing a description of Park-place.

LETTER CXXXIX.

Strawberry-hill, Wednesday night.

I WRITE a few lines only to confirm the truth of much of what you will read in the papers from Paris. Worfe may already be come, or is expected every hour.

Mr. ——— and lady ——— called on me before dinner, after the post was gone out ; and he showed me a letter from D——, who said two couriers arrived yesterday from the duke of Dorset and the duchess of Devonshire, the latter of whom was leaving Paris directly. Necker had been dismissed, and was thought to be set out for Geneva. Breteuil, who was at his country-house, had been sent for to succeed him. Paris was in an uproar ; and, after the couriers had left it, firing of cannon was heard for four hours together. That must have been from the Bastile, as probably the tiers état were not so provided. It is shocking to imagine what may have happened in such a thronged city !

One of the couriers was stopped twice or thrice, as supposed to pass from the king ; but redeemed himself by pretending to be dispatched by the tiers état. Madame de Calonne told D—— that the newly encamped troops desert by hundreds.

Here seems the egg to be hatched, and imagination runs away with the idea. I may fancy I shall hear of the king and queen leaving Versailles, like Charles I.—and then skips imagination fix-and-forty years lower, and figures their fugitive majesties taking refuge in this country.

I have besides another idea. If the Bastile conquers, still is it impossible, considering the general spirit in the country, and the numerous fortified places in France, but some may be seized by the *diffidants*, and whole provinces be torn from the crown ?—On the other hand, if the king prevails, what heavy despotism will the états, by their want of temper and moderation, have drawn on their country ! They might have obtained many capital points, and removed great oppression—No French monarch will ever summon états again, if this moment has been thrown away.

Though

Though I have stocked myself with such a set of visions for the event either way, I do not pretend to foresee what will happen. Penetration argues from reasonable probabilities; but chance and folly are apt to contradict calculation, and hitherto they seem to have full scope for action. One hears of no genius on either side, nor do symptoms of any appear. There will perhaps: such times and tempests bring forth, at least bring out, great men. I do not take the duke of Orleans or Mirabeau to be built du bois dont on les fait—no; nor monsieur Necker. He may be a great traitor, if he made the confusion designedly:—but it is a woful evasion, if the promised financier slips into a black politician. I adore liberty, but I would bestow it as honestly as I could; and a civil war, besides being a game of chance, is paying a very dear price for it.

For us, we are in most danger of a deluge; though I wonder we so frequently complain of long rains. The saying about St. Swithin is a proof of how often they recur; for proverbial sentences are the children of experience, not of prophecy. Good-night!—In a few days I shall send you a beautiful little poem^{*} from the Strawberry press.

L E T T E R CXL.

Strawberry-hill, September 5, 1789.

YOU speak so unperemptorily of your motions, that I must direct to you at random: the most probable place where to hit you, I think, will be Goodwood; and I do address this thither, because I am impatient to thank you for your tale, which is very pretty and easy and genteel. It has made me make a reflection, and that reflection made six lines; which I send you, not as good, but as expressing my thoughts on your writing so well in various ways which you never practised when you was much younger.—Here they are:

The muse most wont to fire a youthful heart,
To gild *your* setting sun reserv'd her art;

^{*} This was Bonner's Ghost.

To

To crown a life in virtuous labours past,
 Bestow'd her numbers, and her wit at last;
 And when your strength and eloquence retire,
 Your voice in notes harmonious shall expire.

The *swan* was too common a thought to be directly specified—and, perhaps, even to be alluded to—No matter—such a trifle is below criticism.

I am still here, in no uncertainty, God knows, about poor lady Dyfart, of whom there are not the smallest hopes. She grows weaker every day, and does actually still go out for the air, and may languish many days, though most probably will go off in a moment, as the water rises. She retains her senses perfectly, and as perfectly her unalterable calmness and patience, though fully sensible of her situation. At your return from Goodwood, I shall like to come to you, if you are unengaged, and ready to receive me. For the beauties of Park-place, I am too well acquainted with them, not, like all old persons about their cotemporaries, to think it preserves them long after they are faded; and I am so *unwalking*, that prospects are more agreeable to me when framed and glazed, and I look at them through a window. It is yourselves I want to visit, not your verdure. Indeed, except a parenthesis of scarce all August, there has been no temptation to walk abroad; and the tempter himself would not have persuaded me, if I could, to have climbed that long-lost mountain whence he could show one even the antipodes. It rained incessantly all June and all July; and now again we have torrents every day.

J——'s brother, the chevalier, is arrived from Paris, and does not diminish the horrors one hears every day. They are now in the capital dreading the sixteen thousand deserters who hover about them. I conclude, that when in the character of banditti the whole disbanded army have plundered and destroyed what they can, they will congregate into separate armies under different leaders, who will hang out different principles, and the kingdom will be a theatre of civil wars; and, instead of liberty, the nation will get petty tyrants—perhaps petty kingdoms:—and when millions have suffered, or been sacrificed, the government will be no better than it was—all owing to the intemperance of the états, who might have obtained a good constitution, or at least one much meliorated, if they had set out with discretion

cretion and moderation. They have left too a sad lesson to despotic princes, who will quote this precedent of frantic états against assembling any more, and against all the examples of senates and parliaments that have preserved rational freedom.

Let me know when it will be convenient to you to receive me. Adieu!

L E T T E R CXLI.

Strawberry-hill, Wednesday night, July 1790.

IT is certainly not from having any thing to tell you, that I reply so soon, but as the most agreeable thing I can do in my confinement. The gout came into my heel the night before last, perhaps from the deluge and damp. I increased it yesterday by limping about the house with a party I had to breakfast. To-day I am lying on the settee, unable to walk alone, or even to put on a slipper. However, as I am much easier this evening, I trust it will go off.

I do not love disputes, and shall not argue with you about Bruce; but if you like him, you shall not choose an author for me. It is the most absurd, obscure, and tiresome book I know. I shall admire if you have a clear conception about most of the persons and matters in his work—but, in fact, I do not believe you have. Pray, can you distinguish between his *cock* and *hen* Heghes, and between all Yafouses and Ozoros?—and do you firmly believe that an old man and his son were sent for and put to death, because the king had run into a thorn-bush, and was forced to leave his clothes behind him? Is it your faith, that one of their Abyssinian majesties pleaded not being able to contribute towards sending for a new Abuna, because he had spent all his money at Venice in looking-glasses? And do you really think that Peter Paez was a Jack-of-all-trades, and built palaces and convents without assistance, and furnished them with his own hands? You, who are a little apt to contest most assertions, must have strangely let out your credulity! I could put forty questions to you as wonderful, and, for my part, could as soon credit

I am tired of railing at French barbarity and folly. They are more puerile
now

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now serious, than when in the long paroxysm of gay levity. Legislators, a senate, to neglect laws, in order to annihilate coats of arms and liveries ! to pull down a king, and set up an emperor ! They are hastening to establish the tribunal of the prætorian guards ; for the sovereignty, it seems, is not to be hereditary. One view of their fête of the 14th I suppose is to draw money to Paris—and the consequence will be, that the deputies will return to the provinces drunk with independence and self-importance, and will commit fifty times more excesses, massacres, and devastations, than last year. George Selwyn says, that *monseigneur*, the king's brother, is the only man of rank from whom they cannot take a title.

How frantically have the French acted, and how rationally the Americans !—But Franklin and Washington were great men. None have appeared yet in France ; and Necker has only returned to make a wretched figure ! He is become as insignificant as his king ; his name is never mentioned, but now and then as disapproving something that is done. Why then does he stay ? Does he wait to strike some great stroke, when every thing is demolished ? His glory, which consisted in being minister though a protestant, is vanished by the destruction of popery ; the honour of which, I suppose, he will scarce assume to himself.

I have vented my budget, and now good night ! I feel almost as if I could walk up to bed.

L E T T E R CXLII.

Strawberry-hill, August 9, at night.

MR. N—— has offered to be postman to you ; *whereof*, though I have nothing, or as little as nothing, to say, I thought *as how* it would look kinder to send nothing in writing than by word of mouth.

Nothing the first. So the peace is made, and the stocks drank its health in a bumper ; but when they waked the next morning, they found they had reckoned without their host, and that their majesties the king of big Britain and the king of little Spain have agreed to make peace some time or other, if they can agree upon it ; and so the stocks drew in their horns : but having
great

great trust in some time or other, they only fell two pegs lower. I, who never believed there would be war, keep my prophetic stocks up to par, and my consolation still higher; for when Spanish pride truckles, and English pride has had the honour of bullying, I dare to say we shall be content with the ostensible triumph, as Spain will be with some secret article that will leave her much where she was before.—Vide Falkland's island.

Nothing the second. Miss ——'s match with lord ——. You asserted it so peremptorily, that, though I doubted it, I quoted you. Lo! it took its rise solely in poor old ——'s dotage, that still harps on conjunctions copulative—but now disavows it, as they say, on a remonstrance from her daughter.

Nothing the third. Nothing will come of nothing, says king Lear, and

Your humble servant

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER CXLIII.

Strawberry-hill, September 27, 1791.

YOUR letter was most welcome, as yours always are, and I answer it immediately, though our post comes in so late that this will not go away till to-morrow.—Nay, I write, though I shall see you on Sunday, and have not a tittle to tell you. I lead so insipid a life, that, though I am content with it, it can furnish me with nothing but repetitions. I scarce ever stir from home in a morning, and most evenings go and play at loto with the French at Richmond, where I am heartily tired of hearing of nothing but their absurd countrymen; absurd both democrates and aristocrates. Calonne sends them gross lies, that raise their hopes to the skies: and in two days they hear of nothing but new horrors and disappointments; and then, poor souls! they are in despair. I can say nothing to comfort them, but what I firmly believe, which is, that total anarchy must come on rapidly.—Nobody pays the taxes that are laid, and which, intended to produce eighty millions a month, do not bring in six. The new assembly

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assembly will fall on the old, probably plunder the richest, and certainly disapprove of much they have done; for can eight hundred new ignorants approve of what has been done by twelve hundred almost as ignorant, and who were far from half agreeing?—And then their immortal constitution (which, besides, is to be mightily mended nine years hence) will die before it has cut any of its teeth but its grinders. The exiles are enraged at their poor king for saving his own life by a forced acceptance; and yet I know no obligation he has to his noblesse, who all ran away to save their own lives; not a gentleman, but the two poor gendarmes at Versailles, having lost their lives in his defence. I suppose La Fayette, Barnave, the Lameths, &c. will run away too, when the new tinkers and cobblers, of whom the present elect are and will be composed, proceed on the levelling system taught them by their predecessors, who, like other levellers, have taken good care of themselves. Good Dr. Priestley's friend, good monsieur Condorcet, has got a place in the treasury of 1000*l.* a year:—*ex uno disce omnes!*—And thus a set of rascals, who might, with temper and discretion, have obtained a very wholesome constitution, witness Poland! have committed infinite mischief, infinite cruelty, infinite injustice, and left a shocking precedent against liberty, unless the Poles are as much admired and imitated as the French ought to be detested.

I do not believe the emperor will stir—yet. He, or his ministers, must see that it is the interest of Germany to let France destroy itself. His interference yet might unite and consolidate—at least check farther confusion:—and though I rather think that twenty thousand men might march from one end of France to the other, as, though the officers often rallied, French soldiers never were stout; yet having no officers, no discipline, no subordination, little resistance might be expected. Yet the enthusiasm that has been spread might turn into courage. Still it were better for Cæsar to wait. Quarrels amongst themselves will dissipate enthusiasm; and if they have no foreign enemy, they will soon have spirit enough to turn their swords against one another, and what enthusiasm remains will soon be converted into the inveteracy of faction. This is speculation, not prophecy:—I do not pretend to guess what will happen:—I do think I know what will not: I mean, the system of experiments that they call a constitution, cannot last. Marvellous indeed would it be, if a set of military noble lads, pedantic academicians, curates of villages, and country advocates, could in two years, amidst the utmost confusion and altercation amongst

amongst themselves, dictated to or thwarted by obstinate clubs of various factions, have achieved what the wisdom of all ages and all nations has never been able to compose—a system of government that would set four-and-twenty millions of people free, and contain them within any bounds! This too without one great man amongst them.—If they had had, as Mirabeau seemed to promise to be—but as we know that he was too—a consummate villain, there would soon have been an end of their vision of liberty. And so there will be still, unless, after a civil war, they split into small kingdoms or commonwealths.—A little nation may be free; for it can be upon its guard. Millions cannot be so; because, the greater the number of men that are one people, the more vices, the more abuses there are, that will either require or furnish pretexts for restraints; and if vices are the mother of laws, the execution of laws is the father of power:—and of such parents one knows the progeny.

I did not think of writing such a rhapsody when I began—it shows how idle I am—I hope you will be so when you receive it. Adieu! I have tired my hand.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. The king of the French has written to the king of France and Great Britain, to notify his accession to the throne of Fontainebleau, where he is determined to reign as long as he is permitted, and obey all the laws that have been made to dethrone him.

N. B. The cardinal de Lomenie, whom they call the cardinal de *l'Ignominie* with much reason, is the only gentleman elected for the new chaos, and he has declined.

LETTER CXLIV.

Strawberry-hill, August 31, 1792.

YOUR long letter and my short one crossed one another upon the road. I knew I was in your debt: but I had nothing to say but what

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you

you know better than I; for you read all the French papers, and I read none, as they have long put me out of all patience: and besides, I hear so much of their horrific proceedings, that they quite disturb me, and have given me what I call *the French disease*; that is, a barbarity that I abhor, for I cannot help wishing destruction to thousands of human creatures whom I never saw.—But when men have worked themselves up into tigers and hyænas, and labour to communicate their appetite for blood, what signifies whether they walk on two legs or four, or whether they dwell in cities, or in forests and dens?—Nay, the latter are the more harmless wild beasts; for they only cranch a poor traveller now and then, and when they are famished with hunger:—the others, though they have dined, cut the throats of some hundreds of poor Swifs for an afternoon's luncheon. Oh! the execrable nation!

I cannot tell you any new particulars, for mesdames de Cambis and d'Hennin, my chief informers, are gone to Goodwood to the poor duchesse de Biron, of whose recovery I am impatient to hear—and so I am of the cause of her very precipitate flight and panic. She must, I think, have had strong motives; for two years ago I feared she was much too courageous, and displayed her intrepidity too publicly. If I did not always condemn the calling *bad people mad people*, I should say all Paris is gone distracted: they furnish provocation to every species of retaliation, by publishing rewards for assassination of kings and generals, and cannot rest without incensing all Europe against them.

The duchess of York gave a great entertainment at Oatlands on her duke's birth-day, sent to his tradesmen in town to come to it, and allowed two guineas apiece to each for their carriage—gave them a dance, and opened the ball herself with the prince of Wales. A company of strollers came to Weybridge to act in a barn: she was solicited to go to it, and did out of charity, and carried all her servants. Next day a methodist teacher came to preach a charity sermon in the same theatre, and she consented to hear it on the same motive—but her servants desired to be excused, on not understanding English.—“Oh!” said the duchess, “but you went to the comedy, which you understood less, and you shall go to the sermon;” to which she gave handsomely, and for them. I like this.

Tack

Tack this to my other fragment, and then, I trust, I shall not be a defaulter in correspondence. I own I am become an indolent poor creature:—but is that strange? With seventy-five years over my head, or on the point of being so; with a chalk-stone in every finger; with feet so limping, that I have been but twice this whole summer round my own small garden, and so much weaker than I was, can I be very comfortable, but when sitting quiet and doing nothing? All my strength consists in my sleep, which is as vigorous as at twenty:—but with regard to letter-writing, I have so many to write on business which I do not understand, since the unfortunate death of my nephew, that, though I make them as brief as possible, half-a-dozen short ones tire me as much as a long one to an old friend; and as the busy ones must be executed, I trespass on the others, and remit them to another day. Norfolk has come very mal-à-propos into the end of my life, and certainly never entered into my views and plans; and I, who could never learn the multiplication table, was not intended to transact leases, direct repairs of farm-houses, settle fines for church lands, negotiate for lowering interest on mortgages, &c. In short, as I was told formerly, though I know several things, I never understood any thing useful. A-propos, the letter of which lady C—— told you is not at all worth your seeing. It was an angry one to a parson who oppresses my tenants, and will go to law with them about tythes. She came in as I was writing it; and as I took up the character of parson myself, and preached to him as pastor of a flock, which it did not become him to lead into the paths of law, instead of those of peace, I thought it would divert, and showed it to her.

Adieu! I have been writing to you till midnight, and my poor fingers ache.

Yours ever,

ORFORD.

L E T T E R CXLV.

Strawberry-hill, June 13, 1793.

I THANK you much for all your information—some parts made me smile:—yet, if what you heard of —— proves true, I rather think it deplorable!

deplorable ! How can love of money, or the still vainer of all vanities, ambition of wearing a high but most insignificant office, which even poor lord ——— could execute, tempt a very old man, who loves his ease and his own way, to stoop to wait like a footman behind a chair, for hours, and in a court whence he had been cast ignominiously ? I believe I have more pride than most men alive : I could be flattered by honours acquired by merit, or by some singular action of eclat—but for titles, ribbands, offices of no business, which any body can fill, and must be given to many, I should just as soon be proud of being the top 'squire in a country village. It is only worse to have waded to distinction through dirt, like lord ———.

All this shifting of scenes may, as you say, be food to the Fronde——Sed defendit numerus. It is perfectly ridiculous to use any distinction of parties but the *ins* and the *outs*. Many years ago I thought that the wisest appellations for contending factions ever assumed, were those in the Roman empire, who called themselves *the greens and the blues* : it was so easy, when they changed sides, to slide from one colour to the other—and then a blue might plead that he had never been *true blue*, but always a *greenish blue* ; and vice versa.

I allow that the steadiest party man may be staggered by novel and unforeseen circumstances. The outrageous proceedings of the French republicans have wounded the cause of liberty, and will, I fear, have shaken it for centuries ; for Condorcet and such fiends are worse than the imperial and royal dividers of Poland.—But I do not see why detestation of anarchy and assassination must immediately make one fall in love with garters and seals.

I am sitting by the fire, as I have done ever since I came hither ; and since I do not expect warm weather in June, I am wishing for rain, or I shall not have a mouthful of hay, nor a nose-ful of roses.—Indeed, as I have seen several fields of hay cut, I wonder it has not brought rain, as usual. My creed is, that rain is good for hay, as I conclude every climate and its productions are suited to each other. Providence did not trouble itself about its being more expensive to us to make our hay over and over ; it only took care it should not want water enough. Adieu !

LETTER

L E T T E R CXLVI.

Strawberry-hill, Wednesday night, late, July 17, 1793.

I AM just come from dining with the bishop of London at Fulham, where I found lord and lady F. C. who told me of the alarm you had from hearing some screams that you thought lady A.'s, and the disorder brought upon you by flying to assist her. I do not at all wonder at your panic, and rejoice it was not founded, and that you recovered so soon. I am not going to preach against your acting so naturally :—but as you have some complaint on your breast, I must hope you will remember this accident, and be upon your guard against both sudden and rapid exertions, when you have not a tantamount call. I conclude the excessive heat we have had for twelve complete days contributed to overpower you.

It is much cooler to-day, yet still delicious ; for be it known to you that I have enjoyed weather worthy of Africa, and yet without swallowing mouthfuls of musketos, nor expecting to hear hyænas howl in the village, nor to find scorpions in my bed. Indeed, all the way I came home, I could but gaze at the felicity of my countrymen. The road was one string of stage-coaches loaded within and without with noisy jolly folks, and chaises and gigs that had been pleasuring in clouds of dust ; every door and every window of every house was open, lights in every shop, every door with women sitting in the street, every inn crowded with jaded horses, and every ale-house full of drunken toppers ; for you know the English always announce their sense of heat or cold by drinking.—Well ! it was impossible not to enjoy such a scene of happiness and affluence in every village, and amongst the lowest of the people—and who are told by villainous scribblers that they are oppressed and miserable.—New streets, new towns are rising every day and every where ; the earth is covered with gardens and crops of grain.

How bitter to turn from this Elysium to the Temple at Paris ! The fiends there have now torn her son from the queen ! Can one believe that they are human beings, who 'midst all their confusions sit coolly meditating new
 7 tortures,

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tortures, new anguish for that poor, helpless, miserable woman, after four years of unexampled sufferings? Oh! if such crimes are not made a dreadful lesson, this world might become a theatre of canibals!

I hope the checks in Bretagne are legends coined by miscreants at Paris. What can one believe? Well, I will go to bed, and try to dream of peace and plenty; and though my lawn is burnt, and my peas and beans, and roses and strawberries parched, I will bear it with patience till the harvest is got in. Saint Swithin can never hold his water for forty days, though he can do the contrary. Good-night!

Yours ever,

O.

LETTER CXLVII.

Berkeley-square, January 10, 1794.

I CERTAINLY sympathize with you on the reversed and gloomy prospect of affairs, too extensive to detail in a letter; nor indeed do I know any thing more than I collect from newspapers and public reports; and those are so overcharged with falsehoods on all sides, that, if one waits for truth to emerge, one finds new subjects to draw one's attention before firm belief can settle its trust on any. That the mass and result are bad, is certain; and though I have great alacrity in searching for comforts and grounds of new hopes, I am puzzled as much in seeking resources, as in giving present credit. Reasoning is out of the question: all calculation is baffled: nothing happens that sense or experience said was probable. I wait to see what will happen, without a guess at what is to be expected. A storm, when the parliament meets, will no doubt be attempted. How the ministers are prepared to combat it, I don't know—but I hope sufficiently—if it spreads no farther:—at least I think they have no cause to fear the new leader who is to make the attack. * * * *

I have neither seen Mr. Wilson's book nor his answerers. So far from reading political pamphlets, I hunt for any books, except modern novels, that will not bring France to my mind, or that at least will put it out for a time.

time. But every fresh person one sees, revives the conversation: and excepting a long succession of fogs, nobody talks of any thing else; nor of private news do I know a tittle. Adieu!

Yours ever,

O.

LETTER CXLVIII.

Strawb. July 2, 1795.

I *WILL* write a word to you, though scarce time to write one, to thank you for your great kindness about the soldier, who shall get a substitute if he can.

As you are, or have been in town, your daughter will have told you in what a bustle I am, preparing—not to resist, but to receive an invasion of royalties to-morrow—and cannot even escape them like admiral Cornwallis, though seeming to make a semblance; for I am to wear a sword, and have appointed two aides de camp, my nephews, George and Horace C——. If I *fall*, as ten to one but I do, to be sure it will be a superb tumble, at the feet of a queen and eight daughters of kings; for, besides the six princesses, I am to have the duchess of York and the princess of Orange! Woe is me, at 78, and with scarce a hand and foot to my back! Adieu!

Yours, &c.

A POOR OLD REMNANT.

LETTER CXLIX.

Strawberry-hill, July 7, 1795.

I AM not dead of fatigue with my royal visitors, as I expected to be, though I was on my poor lame feet three whole hours. Your daughter, who kindly assisted me in doing the honours, will tell you the particulars, and how prosperously I succeeded. The queen was uncommonly condescending and gracious, and deigned to drink my health when I presented her with the last glass, and to thank me for all my attentions.—Indeed my

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memory de vieille cour was but once in default. As I had been assured that her majesty would be attended by her chamberlain, yet was not, I had no glove ready when I received her at the step of her coach: yet she honoured me with her hand to lead her up stairs; nor did I recollect my omission when I led her down again. Still, though gloveless, I did not squeeze the royal hand, as vice-chamberlain Smith did to queen Mary¹.

You will have stared, as I did, at the elector of Hanover deserting his ally the king of Great Britain, and making peace with the monsters. But Mr. F——, whom I saw at my sister's on Sunday, laughs at the article in the newspapers, and says it is not an unknown practice for stock-jobbers to hire an emissary at the rate of five hundred pounds, and dispatch to Franckfort, whence he brings forged attestations of some marvellous political event, and spreads it on 'Change; which produces such a fluctuation in the stocks, as amply overpays the expence of his mission.

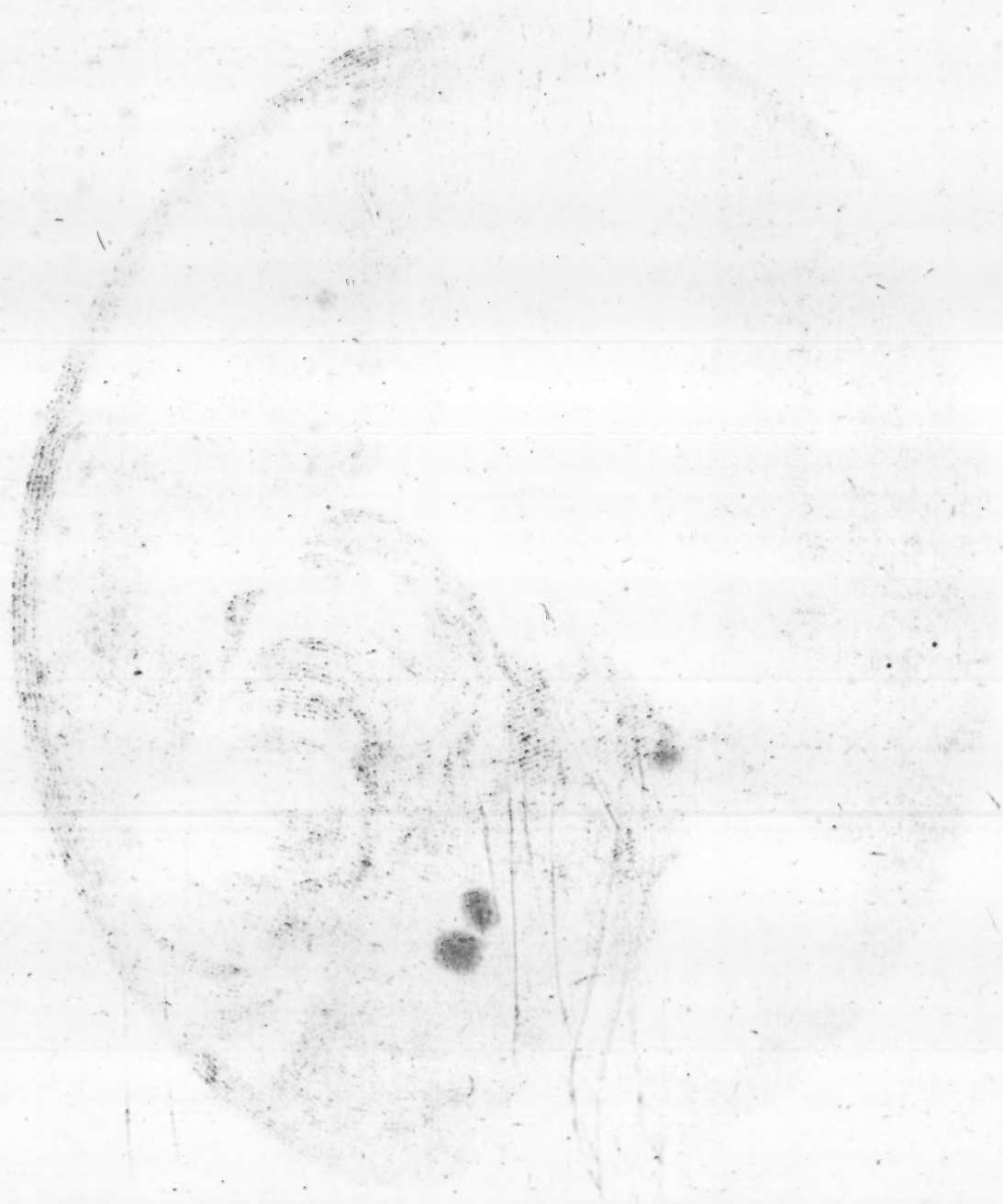
This was all I learnt in the single night I was in town. I have not redde the new French constitution, which seems longer than probably its reign will be. The five sovereigns will, I suppose, be the first guillotined. Adieu!

Yours ever,

O.

¹ It is said that queen Mary asked some of her attendant ladies, what a squeeze of the hand was supposed to intimate?—They said, "Love." —"Then," said the queen, "my vice-chamberlain must be violently in love with me, for he always squeezes my hand."

[Marshal Conway died three days after the date of this letter.]





Ecceus pinxit

Heath Sculp.

Richard Bentley.

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L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

RICHARD BENTLEY, ESQ.

From the Year 1752 to the Year 1756.

L12

THE T. E. K.

THE T. E. K.

LETTERS

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

RICHARD BENTLEY¹, ESQ.

From the Year 1752 to the Year 1756.

LETTER I.

TO RICHARD BENTLEY, ESQ.

Battel, Wednesday, August 5, 1752.

HERE we are, my dear sir, in the middle of our pilgrimage; and lest we should never return from this holy land of abbeys and Gothic castles, I begin a letter to you, that I hope some charitable monk, when he has buried our bones, will deliver to you. We have had piteous distresses, but then we have seen glorious fights! You shall hear of each in their order.

Monday, Wind S. E.—at least that was our direction.—While they were changing our horses at Bromley, we went to see the bishop of Rochester's palace; not for the sake of any thing there was to be seen, but because there was a chimney, in which had stood a flower-pot, in which was put the counterfeit plot against bishop Sprat. 'Tis a paltry parsonage, with nothing of antiquity but two panes of glass, purloined from Islip's chapel in Westmin-

¹ Only son of doctor Bentley, the celebrated commentator.

ster-abbey,

ster-abbey, with that abbot's rebus, an eye and a slip of a tree. In the garden there is a clear little pond, teeming with gold fish. The bishop is more prolific than I am.

From Sevenoak we went to Knowle. The park is sweet, with much old beech, and an immense sycamore before the great gate, that makes me more in love than ever with sycamores. The house is not near so extensive as I expected: the outward court has a beautiful decent simplicity that charms one. The apartments are many, but not large. The furniture throughout, ancient magnificence; loads of portraits, not good, nor curious; ebony cabinets, embossed silver in vases, dishes, &c. embroidered beds, stiff chairs, and sweet bags lying on velvet tables, richly worked in silk and gold. There are two galleries, one very small; an old hall, and a spacious great drawing-room. There is never a good stair-case. The first little room you enter has sundry portraits of the times; but they seem to have been bespoke by the yard, and drawn all by the same painter: one should be happy if they were authentic; for among them there is Dudley duke of Northumberland, Gardiner of Winchester, the earl of Surry the poet, when a boy, and a Thomas duke of Norfolk; but I don't know which. The only fine picture is of lord Goring and Endymion Porter by Vandyke. There is a good head of the queen of Bohemia, a whole length of duc d'Espèrnon, and another good head of the Clifford countess of Dorset, who wrote that admirable haughty letter to secretary Williamson, when he recommended a person to her for member for Appleby: "*I have been bullied by an usurper, I have been neglected by a court, but I won't be dictated to by a subject:—your man sha'n't stand. Ann Dorset, Pembroke and Montgomery.*" In the chapel is a piece of ancient tapestry: faint Luke in his first profession is holding an urinal. Below stairs is a chamber of poets and players, which is proper enough in that house; for the first earl wrote a play, and the last earl was a poet, and I think married a player. Major Mohun and Betterton are curious among the latter, Cartwright and Flatman among the former. The arcade is newly enclosed, painted in fresco, and with modern glass of all the family matches. In the gallery is a whole length of the unfortunate earl of Surry, with his device a broken column, and the motto *Sat superest*. My father had one of them, but larger, and with more emblems, which the duke of Norfolk bought at my brother's sale. There is one good head of Henry VIII. and divers of Cranfield earl of Middlesex, the citizen who
came

came to be lord treasurer, and was very near coming to be hanged. His countess, a bouncing kind of lady mayorefs, looks pure awkward amongst so much good company. A vifto cut through the wood has a delightful effect from the front; but there are some trumpery fragments of gardens that spoil the view from the state apartments.

We lay that night at Tunbridge town, and were surprifed with the ruins of the old caſtle. The gateway is perfect, and the incloſure formed into a vineyard by a Mr. Hooker to whom it belongs, and the walls ſpread with fruit, and the mount on which the keep ſtood, planted in the ſame way. The proſpect is charming, and a breach in the wall opens below to a pretty Gothic bridge of three arches over the Medway. We honoured the man for his taſte—not but that we wiſhed the committee at Strawberry-hill were to fit upon it, and ſtick cypreſſes among the hollows—But, alas! he ſometimes makes eighteen ſour hogſheads, and is going to diſrobe *the ivy-mantled tower*, becauſe it harbours birds!

Now begins our chapter of woes. The inn was full of farmers and tobacco; and the next morning, when we were bound for Penſhurſt, the only man in the town who had two horſes would not let us have them, becauſe the roads, as he ſaid, were ſo bad. We were forced to ſend to the Wells for others, which did not arrive till half the day was ſpent—we all the while up to the head and ears in a market of ſheep and oxen. A mile from the town we climbed up a hill to ſee Summer-hill, the reſidence of Grammont's princeſs of Babylon. There is now ſcarce a road to it: the Paladins of thoſe times were too valorous to fear breaking their necks; and I much apprehend that *la Monſery* and the fair mademoiſelle Hamilton muſt have mounted their palfreys and rode behind their gentlemen-uſhers upon pillions to the Wells. The houſe is little better than a farm, but has been an excellent one, and is entire, though out of repair. I have drawn the front of it to ſhow you, which you are to draw over again to ſhow me. It ſtands high, commands a vaſt landſcape beautifully wooded, and has quantities of large old trees to ſhelter itſelf, ſome of which might be well ſpared to open views.

From Summer-hill we went to Lamberhurſt to dine; near which, that is,
 2 at

at the distance of three miles, up and down impracticable hills, in a most retired vale, such as Pope describes in the last Dunciad,

Where slumber abbots, purple as their vines,

we found the ruins of Bayham abbey, which the Barrets and Hardings bid us visit. There are small but pretty remains, and a neat little Gothic house built near them by their nephew Pratt. They have found a tomb of an abbot, with a crozier, at length on the stone.

Here our woes increase. The roads grew bad beyond all badness, the night dark beyond all darkness, our guide frightened beyond all frightfulness. However, without being at all killed, we got up, or down, I forget which, it was so dark, a famous precipice called Silver-hill, and about ten at night arrived at a wretched village called Rotherbridge. We had still six miles hither, but determined to stop, as it would be a pity to break our necks before we had seen all we intended. But, alas! there was only one bed to be had: all the rest were inhabited by smugglers, whom the people of the house called mountebanks; and with one of whom the lady of the den told Mr. Chute he might lie. We did not at all take to this society, but, armed with links and lanthorns, set out again upon this impracticable journey. At two o'clock in the morning we got hither to a still worse inn, and that crammed with excise officers, one of whom had just shot a smuggler. However, as we were neutral powers, we have passed safely through both armies hitherto, and can give you a little farther history of our wandering through these mountains, where the young gentlemen are forced to drive their curricles with a pair of oxen. The only morsel of good road we have found, was what even the natives had assured us was totally impracticable; these were eight miles to Hurst Monceaux. It is seated at the end of a large vale, five miles in a direct line to the sea, with wings of blue hills covered with wood, one of which falls down to the house in a sweep of 100 acres. The building for the convenience of water to the moat sees nothing at all; indeed it is entirely imagined on a plan of defence, with draw-bridges actually in being, round towers, watch-towers mounted on them, and battlements pierced for the passage of arrows from long bows. It was built in the time of Henry VI. and is as perfect as the first day. It

does

does not seem to have been ever quite finished, or at least that age was not arrived at the luxury of white-wash; for almost all the walls, except in the principal chambers, are in their native *brickhood*. It is a square building, each side about two hundred feet in length; a porch and cloister, very like Eton-college; and the whole is much in the same taste, the kitchen extremely so, with three vast funnels to the chimneys going up on the inside. There are two or three little courts for offices, but no magnificence of apartments. It is scarcely furnished with a few necessary beds and chairs: one side has been fashed, and a drawing-room and dining-room and two or three rooms wainscoted by the earl of Suffex, who married a natural daughter of Charles II. Their arms with delightful carvings by Gibbons, particularly two pheasants, hang over the chimneys. Over the great drawing-room chimney is the coat armour of the first Leonard lord Dacre, with all his alliances. Mr. Chute was transported, and called cousin with ten thousand quarterings. The chapel is small, and mean: the Virgin and seven long lean saints, ill done, remain in the windows. There have been four more, but seem to have been removed for light; and we actually found St. Catherine, and another gentlewoman with a church in her hand, exiled into the buttery. There remain two odd cavities, with very small wooden screens on each side the altar, which seem to have been confessionals. The outside is a mixture of grey brick and stone, that has a very venerable appearance. The drawbridges are romantic to a degree; and there is a dungeon, that gives one a delightful idea of living in the days of fockage and under such goodly tenures. They showed us a dismal chamber which they called *Drummer's-hall*, and suppose that Mr. Addison's comedy is descended from it. In the windows of the gallery over the cloisters, which leads all round to the apartments, is the device of the Fienneses, a wolf holding a baton with a scroll, *Le roy le veut*—an unlucky motto, as I shall tell you presently, to the last peer of that line. The estate is two thousand a year, and so compact as to have but seventeen houses upon it. We walked up a brave old avenue to the church, with ships sailing on our left hand the whole way. Before the altar lies a lank brass knight, hight William Fienis, chevalier, who obiit c.c.c.c.v. that is in 1405. By the altar is a beautiful tomb, all in our trefoil taste, varied into a thousand little canopies and patterns, and two knights reposing on their backs. These were Thomas lord Dacre, and his only son Gregory, who died sans issue. An old grey-headed beardsman of the family talked to us of a blot in the

scutcheon; and we had observed that the field of the arms was green instead of blue, and the lions ramping to the right, contrary to order. This and the man's imperfect narrative let us into the circumstances of the personage before us; for there is no inscription. He went in a Chevy-chace style to hunt in *a Mr. Pelham's* park at Lawton: the keepers opposed, a fray ensued, a man was killed. The haughty baron took the death upon himself, as most secure of pardon: but however, though there was no chancellor of the exchequer in the question, he was condemned to be hanged: *Le roy le vouloit*.

Now you are fully master of Hurst Monceaux, I shall carry you on to Battel—By the way, we bring you a thousand sketches, that you may show us what we have seen. Battel-abbey stands at the end of the town exactly as Warwick-castle does of Warwick; but the house of Webster have taken due care that it should not resemble it in any thing else. A vast building, which they call the old refectory, but which I believe was the original church, is now barn, coach-house, &c. The situation is noble, above the level of abbeys: what does remain of gateways and towers is beautiful, particularly the flat side of a cloister, which is now the front of the mansion-house. A miss of the family has clothed a fragment of a portico with cockleshells! The grounds, and what has been a park, lie in a vile condition. In the church is the tomb of sir Antony Browne, master of the horse for life to Harry VIII. from whose descendants the estate was purchased¹. The head of John Hammond, the last abbot, is still perfect in one of the windows. Mr. Chute says, What charming things we should have done if Battel-abbey had been to be sold at Mrs. Chenevix's, as Strawberry was! Good-night!

Tunbridge, Friday.

WE are returned hither, where we have established our head quarters. On our way, we had an opportunity of surveying that formidable mountain, Silver-hill, which we had floundered down in the dark: it commands a whole horizon of the richest blue prospect you ever saw. I take it to be the individual spot to which the duke of Newcastle carries the smugglers,

¹ At the date of this letter Mr. Pelham was the magnificent house at Battel, of which I prime minister. E. suppose the ruinous apartment still remaining

² It is said on the tomb of the first lord was part. Montacute, at Coudray in Sussex, that he built

and,

and, showing them Suffex and Kent, says, All this will I give you, if you will fall down and worship me. Indeed one of them, who exceeded the tempter's warrant, hangs in chains on the very spot where they finished the life of that wretched custom-house officer whom they were two days in murdering.

This morning we have been to Penshurst—but, oh! how fallen!—The park seems to have never answered its character: at present it is forlorn; and instead of Sacharissa's cypher carved on the beeches, I should sooner have expected to have found the milk-woman's score. Over the gate is an inscription, purporting the manor to have been a boon from Edward VI. to sir William Sydney. The apartments are the grandest I have seen in any of these old palaces, but furnished in a tawdry modern taste. There are loads of portraits; but most of them seem christened by chance, like children at a foundling-hospital. There is a portrait of Languet, the friend of sir Philip Sydney; and divers of himself and all his great kindred, particularly his sister-in-law with a vast lute, and Sacharissa, charmingly handsome. But there are really four very great curiosities, I believe as old portraits as any extant in England: they are, Fitzallen archbishop of Canterbury, Humphry Stafford the first duke of Buckingham, T. Wentworth, and John Foxle; all four with the dates of their commissions as constables of Queenborough-castle, from whence I suppose they were brought. The last is actually receiving his investiture from Edward the third, as Wentworth is in the dress of Richard the third's time. They are really not very ill done*. There are six more, only heads; and we have found since we came home, that Penshurst belonged for a time to that duke of Buckingham. There are some good tombs in the church, and a very Vandal one, called *sir Stephen of Pencbester*. When we had seen Penshurst, we borrowed saddles, and, bestriding the horses of our post-chaise, set out for Hever to visit a tomb of sir Thomas Bullen earl of Wiltshire, partly with a view to talk of it in Anna Bullen's walk at Strawberry-hill. But the measure of our woes was not full; we could not find our way, and were forced to return; and again lost ourselves in coming

* In Harris's History of Kent, he gives from sir Edward Hobby, is said to have collected all Philpot a list of the constables of Queenbo- their portraits, of which number most probably rough castle, p. 376; the last but one of whom, were these ten.

from Penhurst, having been directed to what they called a better road than the execrable one we had gone.

Since dinner we have been to lord Westmorland's at Mereworth, which is so perfect in a Palladian taste, that I must own it has recovered me a little from Gothic. It is better situated than I had expected from the bad reputation it bears, and has some prospect, though it is in a moat, and mightily besprinkled with small ponds. The design, you know, is taken from the Villa del Capra by, Vicenza, but on a larger scale; yet, though it has cost an hundred thousand pounds, it is still only a fine villa: the finishing of in and outside has been exceedingly expensive. A wood that runs up a hill behind the house is broke like an Albano landscape with an octagon temple and a triumphal arch; but then there are some dismal clipt hedges, and a pyramid, which by a most unnatural copulation is at once a grotto and a greenhouse. Does it not put you in mind of the proposal for your drawing a garden-feat, Chinese on one side and Gothic on the other? The chimneys, which are collected to a centre, spoil the dome of the house, and the hall is a dark well. The gallery is eighty-two feet long, hung with green velvet and pictures, among which is a fine Rembrandt, and a pretty La Hire. The ceilings are painted, and there is a fine bed of silk and gold tapestry. The attic is good, and the wings extremely pretty, with porticos formed on the style of the house. The earl has built a new church, with a steeple which seems designed for the latitude of Cheapside, and is so tall, that the poor church curtsies under it, like Mary Rich¹ in a vast high-crown hat: it has a round portico like St. Clement's, with vast Doric pillars supporting a thin shelf. The inside is the most abominable piece of tawdriness that ever was seen, stuffed with pillars painted in imitation of verd antique, as all the sides are like Siena marble: but the greatest absurdity is a Doric frieze, between the triglyphs of which is the Jehovah, the I. H. S. and the dove. There is a little chapel with Nevil tombs, particularly of the first Fane earl of Westmorland, and of the founder of the old church, and the heart of a knight who was killed *in the wars*. On the Fane tomb is a pedigree of brass in relief, and a genealogy of virtues to answer it. There is an entire window of painted-glass arms, chiefly modern, in the chapel, and another over the high altar. The hos-

¹ Daughter of sir Robert Rich, and elder sister of Elizabeth Rich lady Lyttelton. E.

pitality of the house was truly Gothic ; for they made our postillion drunk, and he overturned us close to a water, and the bank did but just save us from being in the middle of it. Pray, whenever you travel in Kentish roads, take care of keeping your driver sober.

Rochester, Sunday.

WE have finished our progress sadly ! Yesterday, after twenty mishaps, we got to Sissinghurst to dinner. There is a park in ruins, and a house in ten times greater ruins, built by sir John Baker, chancellor of the exchequer to queen Mary. You go through an arch of the stables to the house, the court of which is perfect and very beautiful. The duke of Bedford has a house at Cheney's in Buckinghamshire, which seems to have been very like it, but is more ruined. This has a good apartment, and a fine gallery a hundred and twenty feet by eighteen, which takes up one side : the wainscot is pretty and entire ; the ceiling vaulted, and painted in a light genteel grotesque. The whole is built for show ; for the back of the house is nothing but lath and plaster. From thence we went to Bocton-Malherbe, where are remains of a house of the Wottons, and their tombs in the church : but the roads were so exceedingly bad, that it was dark before we got thither—and still darker before we got to Maidstone. From thence we passed this morning to Leeds castle. Never was such disappointment ! There are small remains : the moat is the only handsome object, and is quite a lake, supplied by a cascade which tumbles through a bit of a romantic grove. The Fairfaxes have fitted up a pert bad apartment in the fore-part of the castle, and have left the only tolerable rooms for offices. They had a gleam of Gothic in their eyes ; but it soon passed off into some modern windows, and some that never were ancient. The only thing that at all recompensed the fatigues we have undergone, was a picture of the duchess of Buckingham, *la Ragotte*, who is mentioned in Grammont—I say us ; for I trust that Mr. Chute is as true a bigot to Grammont as I am. Adieu ! I hope you will be as weary with reading our history, as we have been in travelling it.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Wentworth-castle, August.

I ALWAYS dedicate my travels to you. My present expedition has been very amusing: fights are thick sown in the counties of York and Nottingham: the former is more historic, and the great lords live at a prouder distance: in Nottinghamshire there is a very heptarchy of little kingdoms elbowing one another, and the barons of them want nothing but small armies to make inroads into one another's parks, murder deer, and massacre park-keepers.—But to come to particulars: The great road as far as Stamford is superb: in any other country it would furnish medals, and immortalize any drowsy monarch in whose reign it was executed. It is continued much farther, but is more rumbling. I did not stop at Hatfield and Burleigh to see the palaces of my great-uncle-ministers, having seen them before. Bugden-palace surprises one prettily in a little village; and the remains of Newark-castle, seated pleasantly, began to open a vein of historic memory. I had only transient and distant views of lord Tyrconnel's at Belton, and of Belvoir. The borders of Huntingdonshire have churches instead of mile-stones—but the richness and extent of Yorkshire quite charmed me.—Oh! what quarries for working in Gothic! This place is one of the very few that I really like: the situation, woods, views, and the improvements are perfect in their kinds: nobody has a truer taste than lord Strafford. The house is a pompous front screening an old house: it was built by the last lord on a design of the Prussian architect Bott, who is mentioned in the King's Memoires de Brandenburg, and is not ugly: the one pair of stairs is entirely engrossed by a gallery of 180 feet, on the plan of that in the Colonna-palace at Rome: it has nothing but four modern statues, and some bad portraits; but, on my proposal, is going to have books at each end. The hall is pretty, but low; the drawing-room handsome: there wants a good eating-room, and staircase; but I have formed a design for both, and I believe they will be executed.—That my plans should be obeyed when yours are not! I shall bring you a ground plot for a Gothic building, which I have proposed that you should draw for a little wood, but in the manner of an ancient market-cross. Without doors all is pleasing: there is a beautiful (artificial) river with a fine semicircular wood overlooking it, and the temple of Tivoli placed happily on a rising towards the end. There are obelisks.

obelisks, columns, and other buildings, and above all, a handsome castle, in the true style, on a rude mountain, with a court and towers : in the castle-yard, a statue of the late lord who built it. Without the park is a lake on each side, buried in noble woods.—Now contrast all this, and you may have some idea of lord Rockingham's. Imagine a most extensive and most beautiful modern front erected before the great lord Strafford's old house, and this front almost blocked up with hills, and every thing unfinished round it, nay within it. The great apartment, which is magnificent, is untouched : the chimney-pieces lie in boxes unopened. The park is traversed by a common road between two high hedges—not from necessity—Oh ! no ; this lord loves nothing but horses, and the inclosures for them take place of every thing. The bowling-green behind the house contains no less than four obelisks, and looks like a Brobdignag nine-pin-alley : on a hill near, you would think you saw the York-buildings water-works invited into the country. There are temples in corn-fields ; and in the little wood, a window-frame mounted on a bunch of laurel, and intended for an hermitage. In the inhabited part of the house, the chimney-pieces are like tombs ; and on that in the library is the figure of this lord's grandfather in a night-gown of plaster and gold. Amidst all this litter and bad taste, I adored the fine Vandyck of lord Strafford and his secretary, and could not help reverencing his bed-chamber. With all his faults and arbitrary behaviour one must worship his spirit and eloquence : where one esteems but a single royalist, one need not fear being too partial. When I visited his tomb in the church (which is remarkably neat and pretty, and enriched with monuments) I was provoked to find a little mural cabinet, with his figure three feet high kneeling. Instead of a stern bust (and his head would furnish a nobler than Bernini's Brutus) one is peevish to see a plaything that might have been bought at Chenevix's. There is a tender inscription to the second lord Strafford's wife, written by himself—but his genius was fitter to coo over his wife's memory, than to sacrifice to his father's.

Well ! you have had enough of magnificence ; you shall repose in a desert.—Old Wortley Montague lives on the very spot where the dragon of Wantley did—only I believe the latter was much better lodged.—You never saw such a wretched hovel, lean, unpainted, and half its nakedness barely shaded with harateen stretched till it cracks.—Here the miser hoards health and money, his only two objects : he has chronicles in behalf of the air,
and:

and battens on Tokay, his single indulgence, as he has heard it is particularly salutary. But the savageness of the scene would charm your Alpine taste: it is tumbled with fragments of mountains, that look ready laid for building the world. One scrambles over a huge terrace, on which mountain ashes and various trees spring out of the very rocks; and at the brow is the den, but not spacious enough for such an inmate. However, I am persuaded it furnished Pope with this line, so exactly it answers to the picture:

On rifted rocks, the dragon's late abodes.

I wanted to ask if Pope had not visited lady Mary Wortley here during their intimacy—but could one put that question to *Avidien* himself? There remains an ancient odd inscription here, which has such a whimsical mixture of devotion and romanticness that I must transcribe it:

Preye for the soul of sir Thomas Wortley, knight of the body to the kings Edward IV. Richard III. Henry VII. Henry VIII. whose faults God pardon. He caused a lodge to be built on this crag in the midst of Wharn-cliff (the old orthography) to hear the harts bell, in the year of our Lord 1510.—It was a chase, and what he meant to hear was the noise of the stags.

During my residence here I have made two little excursions; and I assure you it requires resolution: the roads are insufferable: they mend them—I should call it spoil them—with large pieces of stone. At Pomfret I saw the remains of that memorable castle “where Rivers, Vaughan, and Grey lay shorter by the head;” and on which Gray says,

And thou, proud boy, from Pomfret's walls shalt send
A groan, and envy oft thy happy grandfire's end!

The ruins are vanishing, but well situated; there is a large demolished church, and a pretty market-house. We crossed a Gothic bridge of eight arches at Ferrybridge, where there is a pretty view, and went to a large old house of lord Huntingdon's at Ledstone, which has nothing remarkable but a lofty terrace, a whole-length portrait of his grandfather in tapestry, and the having belonged to the great lord Strafford. We saw that

that monument of part of poor fir John —'s extravagance, his house and garden, which he left orders to make without once looking at either plan. The house is a bastard Gothic, but of not near the extent I had heard. We lay at Leeds, a dingey large town; and through very bad black roads, for the whole country is a colliery, or a quarry, we went to Kirkstall-abbey, where are vast Saxon ruins, in a most picturesque situation, on the banks of a river that falls in a cascade among rich meadows, hills and woods: it belongs to lord Cardigan: his father pulled down a large house here, lest it should interfere with the family seat, Deane. We returned through Wakefield, where is a pretty Gothic chapel on a bridge, erected by Edward IV. in memory of his father, who lived at Sandal-castle just by, and perished in the battle here. There is scarce any thing of the castle extant, but it commanded a rich prospect.

By permission from their graces of Norfolk, who are at Tunbridge, lord Strafford carried us to Worktop, where we passed two days. The house is huge, and one of the magnificent works of old Bess of Hardwicke, who guarded the queen of Scots here for some time in a wretched little bed-chamber within her own lofty one: there is a tolerable little picture of Mary's needle-work. The great apartment is vast and trift, the whole leanly furnished: the great gallery, of above two hundred feet, at the top of the house, is divided into a library, and into nothing. The chapel is decent. There is no prospect, and the barren face of the country is richly furred with evergreen plantations, under the direction of the late lord Petre.

On our way we saw Kiveton, an ugly neglected seat of the duke of Leeds, with noble apartments and several good portraits—Oh! portraits!—I went to Welbeck—It is impossible to describe the bales of Cavendishes, Harleys, Holleses, Veres, and Ogles: every chamber is tapestried with them; nay, and with ten thousand other fat morsels; all their histories inscribed; all their arms, crests, devices, sculptured on chimneys of various English marbles in ancient forms (and, to say truth, most of them ugly). Then such a Gothic hall, with pendent fret-work in imitation of the old, and with a chimney-piece extremely like mine in the library! such water-colour pictures! such historic fragments! In short, such and so much of every thing I like, that my party thought they should never get me away again.

There is Prior's portrait, and the column and Varelst's flower on which he wrote; and the authorefs duchefs of Newcastle in a theatric habit, which she generally wore, and, consequently, looking as mad as the present duchefs; and dukes of the same name, looking as foolish as the present duke; and lady Mary Wortley, drawn as an authorefs, with rather better pretensions; and cabinets and glassess wainscoted with the Greendale oak, which was so large, that an old steward wisely cut a way through it to make a triumphal passage for his lord and lady on their wedding, and only killed it!—But it is impossible to tell you half what there is. The poor woman who is just dead¹, passed her whole widowhood, except in doing ten thousand right and just things, in collecting and monumenting the portraits and reliques of all the great families from which she descended, and which centred in her. The duke and duchefs of Portland are expected there tomorrow, and we saw dozens of cabinets and coffers with the seals not yet taken off. What treasures to revel over! The horseman duke's manege is converted into a lofty stable, and there is still a grove or two of magnificent oaks that have escaped all these great families, though the last lord Oxford cut down above an hundred thousand pounds worth. The place has little pretty, distinct from all these reverend circumstances.

 LETTER III.

Arlington-street, September 1753.

MY DEAR SIR,

I AM going to send you another volume of my travels; I don't know whether I shall not, at last, write a new *Camden's Britannia*; but lest you should be afraid of my itinerary, I will at least promise you that it shall not be quite so dry as most surveys, which contain nothing but lists of impropriations and glebes, and carucates, and transcripts out of Domesday, and tell one nothing that is entertaining, describe no houses nor parks, mention no curious pictures, but are fully satisfied if they inform you, that they believe that some nameless old tomb belonged to a knight-templar, or one of the crusado, because he lies cross-legged. Another promise I will make you is, that my love of abbeys shall not make me hate the Reformation till that makes me grow a Jacobite like the rest of my antiquarian predecessors; of whom, Dart in particular wrote billingsgate against Cromwell

¹ Lady Oxford, widow of the second earl of Oxford, and mother to the duchefs of Portland.

and

and the regicides; and sir Robert Atkins concludes his summary of the Stuarts with saying, *that it is no reason, because they have been so, that this family should always continue unfortunate.*

I have made my visit at Hagley as I intended. On my way I dined at Park-place, and lay at Oxford. As I was quite alone, I did not care to see any thing; but as soon as it was dark I ventured out, and the moon rose as I was wandering among the colleges, and gave me a charming venerable Gothic scene, which was not lessened by the monkish appearance of the old fellows stealing to their pleasures. Birmingham is large, and swarms with people and trade, but did not answer my expectation from any beauty in it: yet new as it is, I perceived how far I was got back from the London begira; for every ale-house is here written *mug-house*, a name one has not heard of since the riots in the late king's time.

As I got into Worcestershire, I opened upon a landscape of country which I prefer even to Kent, which I had reckoned the most beautiful county in England: but this, with all the richness of Kent, is bounded with mountains. Sir George Lyttelton's house is immeasurably bad and old: one room at the top of the house, which was reckoned a *conceit* in those days, projects a vast way into the air. There are two or three curious pictures, and some of them extremely agreeable to me for their relation to Grammont: there is *le serieux Lyttelton*, but too old for the date of that book; mademoiselle Stuart, lord Brounker, and lady Southesk; besides, a portrait of lord Clifford the treasurer, with his staff, but drawn in armour (though no soldier) out of flattery to Charles the second, as he said the most glorious part of his life was attending the king at the battle of Worcester. He might have said that it was as *glorious* as any part of his majesty's life. You might draw, but I can't describe the enchanting scenes of the park: it is a hill of three miles, but broke into all manner of beauty; such lawns, such wood, rills, cascades, and a thickness of verdure quite to the summit of the hill, and commanding such a vale of towns and meadows, and woods extending quite to the Black mountain in Wales, that I quite forgot my favourite Thames!—Indeed, I prefer nothing to Hagley but mount Edgecumbe. There is extreme taste in the park: the seats are not the best, but there is not one absurdity. There is a ruined castle, built by Miller, that would get him his freedom even of Strawberry: it has the true rust

of the barons' wars. Then there is a scene of a small lake with cascades falling down such a Parnassus! with a circular temple on the distant eminence; and there is such a fairy dale, with more cascades gushing out of rocks! and there is a hermitage, so exactly like those in Sadeler's prints, on the brow of a shady mountain, stealing peeps into the glorious world below! and there is such a pretty well under a wood, like the Samaritan woman's in a picture of Nicolò Poussin! and there is such a wood without the park, enjoying such a prospect! and there is such a mountain on t'other side of the park commanding all prospects, that I wore out my eyes with gazing, my feet with climbing, and my tongue and my vocabulary with commending! The best notion I can give you of the satisfaction I showed, was, that sir George proposed to carry me to dine with my lord Foley; and when I showed reluctance, he said, *Why, I thought you did not mind any strangers, if you were to see any thing!* Think of my not minding strangers! I mind them so much, that I missed seeing Hartlebury-castle, and the bishop of Worcester's chapel of painted glass there, because it was his public day when I passed by his park.—Miller has built a Gothic house in the village at Hagley for a relation of sir George: but there he is not more than Miller; in his castle he is almost Bentley. There is a genteel tomb in the church to sir George's first wife, with a Cupid and a pretty urn in the Roman style.

You will be diverted with my distresses at Worcester. I set out boldly to walk down the high-street to the cathedral: I found it much more peopled than I intended, and, when I was quite embarked, discovered myself up to the ears in a contested election. A new candidate had arrived the night before, and turned all their heads. Nothing comforted me, but that the opposition is to Mr. T——; and I purchased my passage very willingly with crying *No T——! No Jews!* However, the inn where I lay was Jerusalem itself, the very head-quarters, where T—— the pharisee was expected; and I had scarce got into my room, before the victorious mob of his enemy, who had routed his advanced guard, broke open the gates of our inn, and almost murdered the ostler—and then carried him off to prison for being murdered.

The cathedral is pretty, and has several tombs, and clusters of light pillars of Derbyshire marble, lately cleaned. Gothicism and the restoration of that architecture, and not of the bastard breed, spreads extremely in this
I
part

part of the world. Prince Arthur's tomb, from whence we took the paper for the hall and stair-case, to my great surprize, is on a less scale than the paper, and is not of brass but stone, and that wretchedly white-washed. The niches are very small, and the long slips in the middle are divided every now and then with the trefoil. There is a fine tomb for bishop Hough, in the Westminster-abbey style; but the obelisk at the back is not loaded with a globe and a human figure, like Mr. Kent's design for sir Isaac Newton: an absurdity which nothing but himself could surpass, when he placed three busts at the foot of an altar—and, not content with that, placed them at the very angles—where they have as little to do as they have with Shakespeare.

From Worcester I went to see Malvern-abbey. It is situated half way up an immense mountain of that name: the mountain is very long, in shape like the prints of a whale's back: towards the larger end lies the town. Nothing remains but a beautiful gateway and the church, which is very large: every window has been glutted with painted glass, of which much remains, but it did not answer: blue and red there is in abundance, and good faces; but the portraits are so high, I could not distinguish them. Besides, the woman who showed me the church would pester me with Christ and king David, when I was hunting for John of Gaunt and king Edward. The greatest curiosity, at least what I had never seen before, was, the whole floor and far up the sides of the church has been, if I may call it so, wainscoted with red and yellow tiles, extremely polished, and diversified with coats of arms, and inscriptions, and mosaic. I have since found the same at Gloucester, and have even been so fortunate as to purchase from the sexton about a dozen, which think what an acquisition for Strawberry! They are made of the natural earth of the country, which is a rich red clay, that produces every thing. All the lanes are full of all kind of trees, and enriched with large old apple-trees, that hang over from one hedge to another. Worcester city is large and pretty. Gloucester city is still better situated, but worse built, and not near so large. About a mile from Worcester you break upon a sweet view of the Severn. A little farther on the banks is Mr. Lechmere's house; but he has given strict charge to a troop of willows never to let him see the river: to his right hand extends the fairest meadow covered with cattle that ever you saw: at the end of it is the town of Upton,

ton, with a church half ruined, and a bridge of six arches, which I believe with little trouble he might see from his garden.

The vale increases in riches to Gloucester. I staid two days at George Selwyn's house called Matson, which lies on Robin Hood's-hill: it is lofty enough for an alp, yet is a mountain of turf to the very top, has wood scattered all over it, springs that long to be cascades in twenty places of it; and from the summit it beats even sir G. Lyttelton's views, by having the city of Gloucester at its foot, and the Severn widening to the horizon. His house is small, but neat. King Charles lay here at the siege; and the duke of York, with typical fury, hacked and hewed the window-shutters of his chamber, as a memorandum of his being there. Here is a good picture of Dudley earl of Leicester in his later age, which he gave to sir Francis Walsingham, at whose house in Kent it remained till removed hither; and what makes it very curious, is, his age marked on it, 54 in 1572. I had never been able to discover before in what year he was born. And here is the very flower-pot and counterfeit association, for which bishop Sprat was taken up, and the duke of Marlborough sent to the Tower. The reservoirs on the hill supply the city. The late Mr. Selwyn governed the borough by them—and I believe by some wine too. The bishop's house is pretty, and restored to the Gothic by the last bishop. Price has painted a large chapel-window for him, which is scarce inferior for colours, and is a much better picture than any of the old glass. The eating-room is handsome. As I am a protestant Goth, I was glad to worship bishop Hooper's room, from whence he was led to the stake: but I could almost have been a Hun, and set fire to the front of the house, which is a small pert portico, like the conveniencies at the end of a London garden. The outside of the cathedral is beautifully light; the pillars in the nave outrageously plump and heavy. There is a tomb of one Abraham Blackleach, a great curiosity; for, though the figures of him and his wife are cumbent, they are very graceful, designed by Vanduyck, and well executed. Kent designed the screen; but knew no more there than he did any where else how to enter into the true Gothic taste. Sir Christopher Wren, who built the tower of the great gate-way at Christ-church, has catched the graces of it as happily as you could do: there is particularly a niche between two compartments of a window, that is a masterpiece.

But

But here is a *modernity*, which beats all antiquities for curiosity : Just by the high altar is a small pew hung with green damask, with curtains of the same ; a small corner-cupboard, painted, carved and gilt, for books, in one corner, and two troughs of a bird-cage, with feeds and water. If any mayorefs on earth was small enough to inclose herself in this tabernacle, or abstemious enough to feed on rape and canary, I should have sworn that it was the shrine of the queen of the aldermen. It belongs to a Mrs. Cotton, who, having lost a favourite daughter, is convinced her soul is transmigrated into a robin-red-breast ; for which reason she passes her life in making an aviary of the cathedral of Gloucester. The chapter indulge this whim, as she contributes abundantly to glaze, whitewash and ornament the church.

King Edward the second's tomb is very light and in good repair. The old wooden figure of Robert, the conqueror's unfortunate eldest son, is extremely genteel, and, though it may not be so ancient as his death, is in a taste very superior to any thing of much later ages. Our Lady's chapel has a bold kind of portal, and several ceilings of chapels, and tribunes in a beautiful taste : but of all delight, is what they call the abbot's cloister. It is the very thing that you would build, when you had extracted all the quintessence of trefoils, arches, and lightness. In the church is a star-window of eight points, that is prettier than our rose-windows.

A little way from the town are the ruins of Lantony Priory : there remains a pretty old gate-way, which G. Selwyn has begged, to erect on the top of his mountain, and it will have a charming effect.

At Burford I saw the house of Mr. Lenthal, the descendant of the Speaker. The front is good ; and a chapel connected by two or three arches, which let the garden appear through, has a pretty effect ; but the inside of the mansion is bad and ill-furnished. Except a famous picture of sir Thomas More's family, the portraits are rubbish, though celebrated. I am told that the Speaker, who really had a fine collection, made his peace by presenting them to Cornbury, where they were, well known, till the duke of Marlborough bought that seat.

I can't go and describe so known a place as Oxford, which I saw pretty well on my return. The whole air of the town charms me ; and what remains

mains of the true Gothic *un-Gibbs'd*¹, and the profusion of painted glass, were entertainment enough to me. In the picture-gallery are quantities of portraits; but in general they are not only not so much as copies, but *proxies*—so totally unlike they are to the persons they pretend to represent. All I will tell you more of Oxford is, that Fashion has so far prevailed over her collegiate sister, Custom, that they have altered the hour of dinner from twelve to one. Does not it put one in mind of reformations in religion? One don't abolish Mahomedism; one only brings it back to where the impostor himself left it.—I think it is at the South-sea-house, where they have been forced to alter the hours of payment, instead of from ten to twelve, to from twelve to two; so much do even moneyed citizens fail with the current of idleness!

Was not I talking of religious sects? Methodism is quite decayed in Oxford, its cradle. In its stead, there prevails a delightful fantastic system, called the sect of the Hutchinsonians, of whom one seldom hears any thing in town. After much enquiry, all I can discover is, that their religion consists in driving Hebrew to its fountain head, till they find some word or other in every text of the Old Testament, which may seem figurative of something in the New, or at least of something that may happen God knows when, in consequence of the New. As their doctrine is novel, and requires much study, or at least much invention, one should think that they could not have settled half the canon of what they are to believe—and yet they go on zealously, trying to make and succeeding in making converts.—I could not help smiling at the thoughts of *etymological salvation*²; and I am sure you will smile when I tell you, that according to their gravest doctors, *Soap is an excellent type of Jesus Christ, and the York-buildings waterworks of the Trinity*.—I don't know whether this is not as entertaining as the passion of the Moravians for the *little side-hole*! Adieu! my dear sir!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Mr. Walpole means, unaltered by the architect Gibbs.

² Alluding to what he has said above of driv-

ing Hebrew to its fountain head, and so making salvation to depend upon the meaning or etymology of some particular word. E.

LETTER IV.

Arlington-street, December 19, 1753.

I LITTLE thought when I parted with you, my dear sir, that your absence¹ could indemnify me so well for itself; I still less expected that I should find you improving daily: but your letters grow more and more entertaining, your drawings more and more picturesque; you write with more wit, and paint with more *melancholy*, than ever any body did: your woody mountains hang down *somewhat so poetical*, as Mr. Ashe² said, that your own poet Gray will scarce keep tune with you. All this refers to your cascade scene and your letter. For the library, it cannot have the Strawberry imprimatur: the double arches and double pinnacles are most ungraceful; and the doors below the book-cases in Mr. Chute's design had a conventual look, which yours totally wants. For this time, we shall put your genius in commission, and, like some other regents, execute our own plan without minding our sovereign. For the chimney, I do not wonder you missed our instructions: we could not contrive to understand them ourselves; and therefore, determining nothing but to have the old picture stuck in a thicket of pinnacles, we left it to you to find out *the how*. I believe it will be a little difficult; but as I suppose *facere quia impossibile est*, is full as easy as *credere*, why—you must do it.

The present journal of the world and of me stands thus: King George II. does not go abroad—Some folks fear nephews³, as much as others hate uncles. The castle of Dublin has carried the Armagh election by one vote only—which is thought equivalent to losing it by twenty. Mr. Pelham has been very ill, I thought of St. Patrick's fire⁴, but it proved St. Antony's. Our house of commons, mere poachers, are piddling with the torture of Leheup, who extracted so much money out of the lottery.

¹ Mr. Bentley was now in the island of Jersey, whither he had retired on account of the derangement of his affairs; and whither all the following letters are addressed to him.

down somewhat poetical."

² A nursery-man at Twickenham. He had served Pope. Mr. Walpole telling him he would have his trees planted irregularly, he said, "Yes, sir, I understand: you would have them hang

³ Frederic II. king of Prussia, nephew to George II. Mr. Walpole alludes to himself, who was upon bad terms with his uncle Horace Walpole, afterwards lord Walpole of Wolterton. E.

⁴ Alluding to the disturbances and opposition to government, which took place in Ireland during the viceroyalty of Lionel duke of Dorset.

The robber of *Po Yang*¹ is discovered, and I hope will be put to death, without my pity interfering, as it has done for Mr. Shorter's servant², or lady ———'s, as it did for Maclean³. In short, it was a heron. I like this better than thieves, as I believe the gang will be more easily destroyed, though not mentioned in the king's speech or Fielding's treatises.

Lord Clarendon, lord Thanet, and lord Burlington, are dead. The second sent for his taylor, and asked him if he could make him a suit of mourning in eight hours: if he could, he would go into mourning for his brother Burlington⁴—but that he did not expect to live twelve hours himself.

There are two more volumes come out of Sir Charles Grandison. I shall detain them till the last is published, and not think I postpone much of your pleasure. For my part, I stopped at the fourth; I was so tired of sets of people getting together, and saying, *Pray, miss, with whom are you in love?* and of mighty good young men that convert your *Mr. M——*s in the twinkling of a sermon!—You have not been much more diverted, I fear, with Hogarth's book⁵—'Tis very silly!—Palmyra is come forth, and is a noble book; the prints finely engraved, and an admirable dissertation before it. My wonder is much abated: the Palmyrene empire which I had figured, shrunk to a small trading city with some magnificent public buildings out of proportion to the dignity of the place.

The operas succeed pretty well; and music has so much recovered its power of charming, that there is started up a burletta at Covent-garden, that has half the vogue of the old Beggar's opera: indeed there is a soubrette, called the Nicolina, who, besides being pretty, has more vivacity and variety of humour than ever existed in any creature.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Mr. Walpole had given this Chinese name to a pond of gold fish at Strawberry-hill.

² A celebrated highwayman.

³ A Swiss servant of Erasmus Shorter's, maternal uncle to Mr. Walpole, who was not without suspicion of having hastened his master's death. E.

⁴ The countesses of Thanet and Burlington were sisters.

⁵ The Analysis of Beauty.

LETTER

LETTER V.

Arlington-street, March 2, 1754.

AFTER calling two or three times without finding him, I wrote yesterday to lord Granville¹, and received a most gracious answer, but desiring to see me. I went. He repeated all your history with him, and mentioned your vivacity at parting; however, consented to give you the apartment, with great good humour, and said he would write to his bailiff; and added, laughing, that he had an old cross housekeeper, who had regularly quarrelled with all his grantees. It is well that some of your desires, though unfortunately the most trifling, depend on me alone, as those at least are sure of being executed. By Tuesday's coach there will go to Southampton, two orange-trees, two Arabian jasmynes, some tuberose roots, and plenty of cypress seeds, which last I send you in lieu of the olive-trees, none of which are yet come over.

The weather grows fine, and I have resumed little flights to Strawberry. I carried G. Montagu thither, who was in raptures, and screamed, and hooped and hollaed, and danced, and crossed himself a thousand times over. He returns to-morrow to Greatworth, and I fear will give himself up entirely to country *'squirehood*. But what will you say to greater honour which Strawberry has received? Nolkejumkoi² has been to see it, and liked the windows and staircase. I can't conceive how he entered it. I should have figured him like Gulliver cutting down some of the largest oaks in Windsor forest to make joint-stools, in order to straddle over the battlements and peep in at the windows of Lilliput. I can't deny myself this reflection (even though he liked Strawberry), as he has not employed you as an architect.

Still there is little news. To-day it is said that lord George Sackville is summoned in haste from Ireland, where the grand juries are going to petition for the re-fitting of the parliament. Hitherto they have done nothing but invent satirical healths, which I believe gratify a taste more peculiar to Ire-

¹ John earl Granville, then secretary of state, had an estate in Jersey.

² Cant name for William duke of Cumberland.

land than politics, drinking. We have had one considerable day in the house of commons here. Lord Egmont, in a very long and fine speech, opposed a new mutiny-bill for the troops going to the East Indies (which I believe occasioned the reports with you of an approaching war). Mr. Conway got infinite reputation by a most charming speech in answer to him, in which he displayed a system of military learning, which was at once new, striking, and entertaining. I had carried monsieur de Gisors thither, who began to take notes of all I explained to him : but I begged he would not ; for, the question regarding French politics, I concluded the Speaker would never have done storming at the Gaul's collecting intelligence in the very senate-house. Lord Holderness made a magnificent ball for these foreigners last week : there were 140 people, and most staid supper. Two of my Frenchmen learnt country-dances, and succeeded very well. T'other night they danced minuets for the entertainment of the king at the masquerade ; and then he sent for lady Coventry to dance : it was quite like Herodias—and I believe if he had offered her a boon, she would have chosen the head of *St. John*—I believe I told you of her passion for the young lord B.

Dr. Meade is dead, and his collection going to be sold—I fear I have not virtue enough to resist his miniatures—I shall be ruined !

I shall tell you a new instance of the *Sortes Walpoleanæ* : I lately bought an old volume of pamphlets ; I found at the end a history of the dukes of Lorrain, and with that an account of a series of their medals, of which, says the author, there are but two sets in England. It so happens that I bought a set above ten years ago at lord Oxford's sale ; and on examination I found the duchess, wife of duke René, has a head-dress, allowing for being modernised, as the medals are modern, which is evidently the same with that figure in my marriage of Henry VI. which I had imagined was of her. It is said to be taken from her tomb at Angiers ; and that I might not decide too quickly en connoisseur, I have sent to Angiers for a draught of the tomb.

Poor Mr. Chute was here yesterday, the first going out after a confinement of thirteen weeks ; but he is pretty well. We have determined upon the plan for the library¹, which we find will fall in exactly with the proportions of the room, with no variations from the little door-case of St.

¹ At Strawberry-hill.

Paul's, but widening the larger arches. I believe I shall beg your assistance again about the chimney-piece and ceiling; but I can decide nothing till I have been again at Strawberry. Adieu! my dear sir,

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VI.

Arlington-street, March 6, 1754.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOU will be surpris'd at my writing again so very soon; but, unpleasant as it is to be the bearer of ill news¹, I flattered myself that you would endure it better from me, than to be shock'd with it from an indifferent hand, who would not have the same management for your tenderness and delicacy as I naturally shall, who always feel for you, and on this occasion with you! You are very unfortunate: you have not many real friends, and you lose—for I must tell it you, the chief of them! indeed, the only one who could have been of real use to you—for what can I do, but wish, and attempt, and miscarry?—or from whom could I have hoped assistance for you, or warmth for myself and my friends, but from the friend I have this morning lost?—But it is too selfish to be talking of our losses, when Britain, Europe, the world, the king, Jack Roberts², lord Barnard³, have lost their guardian-angel.—What are private misfortunes to the affliction of one's country? or how inglorious is an Englishman to bewail himself, when a true patriot should be acting for the good of mankind!—Indeed, if it is possible to feel any comfort, it is from seeing how many true Englishmen, how many *true Scotchmen*, are zealous to replace the loss, and snatch at the rudder of the state, amidst this storm and danger! Oh! my friend, how will your heart glow with melancholy admiration, when I tell you, that even the poor duke of Newcastle himself conquers the torrent of his

¹ This is an ironic letter on the death of Henry Pelham, first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, with whom Mr. Walpole was on ill terms.

² John Roberts, esquire, secretary to Mr. Pelham.

³ Henry Vane, afterwards earl of Darlington.

grief, and has promised Mrs. Betty Spence¹, and Mr. Graham the apothecary, that, rather than abandon England to its evil genius, He will even submit to be lord treasurer himself! My lord chancellor², too, is said to be willing to devote himself in the same manner for the good of his country. Lord Hartington³ is the most inconsolable of all; and when Mrs. Molly Bodens⁴ and Mrs. G. were entreated by some of the cabinet council to ask him whom he wished to have minister, the only answer they could draw from him was, *A Whig! a Whig!* As for lord B. I may truly say, he is humbled and licks the dust; for his tongue, which never used to hang below the waistband of his breeches, is now dropped down to his shoe-buckles; and had not Mr. Stone assured him, that if the worst came to the worst, they could but make their fortunes under another family, I don't know whether he would not have despaired of the commonwealth. But though I sincerely pity so good a citizen, I cannot help feeling most for poor lord Holderness, who sees a scheme of glory dashed which would have added new lustre to the British annals, and have transmitted the name of D'Arcy down to latest posterity. He had but just taken Mr. Mason the poet into his house *to write his deserts*; and he had just reason to expect that the secretary's office would have gained a superiority over that of France and Italy, which was unknown even to Walsingham.

I had written thus far, and perhaps should have elegized on for a page or two farther, when Harry, who has no idea of the dignity of grief, blundered in, with satisfaction in his countenance, and thrust two packets from you into my hand.—Alas! he little knew that I was incapable of tasting any satisfaction but in the indulgence of my concern.—I was once going to commit them to the devouring flames, lest any light or vain sentence should tempt me to smile; but my turn for true philosophy checked my hand, and made me determine to prove that I could at once launch into the bosom of pleasure and be insensible to it.—I have conquered; I have read your letters, and yet think of nothing but Mr. Pelham's death! Could lady —— do thus? Could she receive a love-letter from Mr. ——, and yet think only on her breathless lord?

¹ Companion to the duchess of Newcastle.

vonshire.

² Philip earl of Hardwicke.

³ William, afterwards fourth duke of De-

⁴ Companion of lady Burlington, lord Hartington's mother-in-law.

TO RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq. 287

Thursday 7.

I WROTE the above last night, and have staid as late as I could this evening, that I might be able to tell you who the person is in whom all the world is to discover the proper qualities for replacing the national loss. But, alas! the experience of two whole days has showed that the misfortune is irreparable; and I don't know whether the elegies on his death will not be finished before there be any occasion for congratulations to his successor. The mystery is profound. How shocking it will be if things should go on just as they are! I mean by that, how mortifying, if it is discovered, that when all the world thought Mr. Pelham did and could alone maintain the calm and carry on the government, even he was not necessary, and that it was the calm and the government that carried on themselves! However, this is not my opinion.—I believe all this *will make a party*¹.

Good-night! There are two more new plays: Constantine, the better of them, expired the fourth night at Covent-garden. Virginia, by Garrick's acting and popularity, flourishes still: he has written a remarkably good epilogue to it. Lord Bolingbroke is come forth in five pompous quartos, two and a half new and most unorthodox. Warburton is resolved to answer, and the bishops not to answer him. I have not had a moment to look into it. Good-night!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VII.

Arlington-street, March 17, 1754.

IN the confusion of things, I last week hazarded a free letter to you by the common post. The confusion is by no means ceased. However, as some circumstances may have rendered a desire of intelligence necessary, I

¹ Mr. Walpole, when young, loved faction; Mr. W. said eagerly, "Will they make a party?" and Mr. Bentley one day saying, "that he believed certain opinions would make a sect,"

send

send this by the coach, with the last volume of Sir Charles Grandison, for its chaperon.

After all the world had been named for chancellor of the exchequer, and my lord chief justice Lee, who is no part of the world, really made so pro tempore; lord Hartington went to notify to Mr. Fox, that the cabinet council having given it as their unanimous opinion to the king, that the duke of Newcastle should be at the head of the treasury, and he (Mr. Fox) secretary of state with the management of the house of commons; his grace, who had submitted to so *oracular* a sentence, hoped Mr. Fox would not refuse to concur in so salutary a measure; and assured him, that *though* the duke would reserve the sole disposition of the secret service-money, his grace would bestow his entire confidence on Mr. Fox, and acquaint him with the most minute details of that service. Mr. Fox bowed and obeyed—and, as a preliminary step, received the chancellor's^{*} absolution. From thence he attended his—and our new master.—But either grief for his brother's death, or joy for it, had so intoxicated the new *maire du palais*, that he would not ratify any one of the conditions he had imposed: and though my lord Hartington's virtue interposed, and remonstrated on the purport of the message he had carried, the duke persisted in assuming the whole and undivided power himself, and left Mr. Fox no choice, but of obeying or disobeying, as he might choose. This produced the next day a letter from Mr. Fox, carried by my lord Hartington, in which he refused secretary of state, and pinned down the lye with which the new ministry is to commence. It was tried to be patched up at the chancellor's on Friday night, though ineffectually; and yesterday morning Mr. Fox in an audience desired to remain secretary at war. The duke immediately kissed hands—declared, in the most unusual manner, universal minister. Legge was to be chancellor of the exchequer; but I can't tell whether that disposition will hold, as lord Duplin is proclaimed the acting favourite. The German sir Thomas Robinson was thought on for the secretary's seals; but has just sense enough to be unwilling to accept them under so ridiculous an administration.—This is the first act of the comedy.

On Friday this august remnant of the Pelhams went to court for the

* With whom he was at variance.

first time. At the foot of the stairs he cried and sunk down : the yeomen of the guard were forced to drag him up under the arms. When the closet-door opened, he flung himself at his length at the king's feet, sobbed, and cried "God bless your majesty ! God preserve your majesty !" and lay there howling and embracing the king's knees, with one foot so extended, that my lord C——, who was *luckily* in waiting, and begged the standers-by to retire, with "For God's sake, gentlemen, don't look at a great man in distress," endeavouring to shut the door, caught his grace's foot, and made him roar out with pain.

You can have no notion of what points of ceremony have been agitated about the tears of the family. George Selwyn was told that my lady Catherine had not shed one tear : "And pray," said he, "don't she intend it ?" It is settled that Mrs. —— is not to cry till she is brought-to-bed.

You love George Selwyn's bons-mots : this crisis has redoubled them : here is one of his best. My lord chancellor is to be earl of Clarendon :—"Yes," said Selwyn, from the very summit of the whites of his demure eyes ; "and I suppose he will get the title of Rochester for his son-in-law, my lord A——." Do you think he will ever lose the title of lord Rochester ?

I expected that we should have been over-run with elegies and panegyrics : indeed I comforted myself, that one word in all of them would atone for the rest—the *late* Mr. Pelham. But the world seems to allow that their universal attachment and submission was universal interestedness : there has not been published a single encomium : orator Henley alone has held forth in his praise :—yesterday it was on *charming lady Catherine*. Don't you think it should have been in these words, in his usual style ?

Oratory-chapel.—Right reason ; madness ; charming lady Catherine ; hell-fire, &c.

Monday, March 18.

ALMOST as extraordinary news as our political, is, that it has snowed ten days successively, and most part of each day : it is living in Muscovy, amid ice and revolutions : I hope lodgings will begin to let a little dear in Siberia !

290 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

Beckford and Delaval, two celebrated partisans, met lately at Shaftesbury, where they oppose one another : the latter said,

“ Art thou the man, whom men fam’d Beckford call ?”

T’other replied,

“ Art thou the much more famous Delaval ?”

But to leave politics, and change of ministries, and to come to something of *real* consequence, I must apply you to my library ceiling ; of which I send you some rudiments. I propose to have it all painted by Clermont ; the principal part in chiaro scuro, on the design which you drew for the Paraclete : but as that pattern would be surfeiting so often repeated in an extension of 20 feet by 30, I propose to break and enliven it by compartments in colours, according to the enclosed sketch, which you must adjust and dimension. Adieu !

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VIII.

Arlington-street, May 18, 1754.

MY DEAR SIR,

UNLESS you will be exact in dating your letters, you will occasion me much confusion. Since the undated one which I mentioned in my last, I have received another as unregistered, with the fragment of the rock, telling me of one which had set sail on the eighteenth, I suppose of last month, and been driven back : this I conclude was the former undated. Yesterday I received a longer, tipped with May 8th. You must submit to this lecture, and I hope will amend by it. I cannot promise that I shall correct myself much in the intention I had of writing to you seldomer and shorter at this time of year. If you could be persuaded how insignificant I think all I do, how little important it is even to myself, you would not wonder that I have not much empressement to give the detail of it to any body else. Little ex-

curfions

curfions to Strawberry, little parties to dine there, and many jaunts to hurry Bromwich, and the carver, and Clermont, are my material occupations. Think of fending these 'cross the sea!—The times produce nothing: there is neither party, nor controverfy, nor gallantry, nor fashion, nor literature—the whole proceeds like farmers regulating themselves, their bufinefs, their views, their diverfions, by the almanac. Mr. Pelham's death has fcarce produced a change; the changes in Ireland, fcarce a murmur. Even in France the fquabbles of the parliament and clergy are under the fame opiate influence.—I don't believe that mademoifelle Murphy¹ (who is delivered of a prince, and is lodged openly at Versailles) and madame Pompadour will mix the leaft grain of ratsbane in one another's tea. I, who love to ride in the whirlwind, cannot record the yawns of fuch an age!

The little that I believe you would care to know relating to the Strawberry annals, is, that the great tower is finished on the outside, and the whole whitened, and has a charming effect, efpecially as the verdure of this year is beyond what I have ever feen it: the grove neareft the houfe comes on much: you know I had almoft defpaired of its ever making a figure. The bow-window room over the fupper-parlour is finished; hung with a plain blue paper, with a chintz bed and chairs; my father and mother over the chimney in the Gibbons frame, about which you know we were in difpute what to do. I have fixed on black and gold, and it has a charming effect over your chimney with the two dropping points, which is executed exactly; and the old grate of Henry VIII. which you bought, is within it. In each pannel round the room is a fingle picture; Grey's, fir Charles Williams's, and yours, in their black and gold frames; mine is to match yours; and on each fide the door are the pictures of Mr. Churchill and lady Mary, with their fon, on one fide, Mr. Conway and lady Ailefbury on the other. You can't imagine how new and pretty this furniture is.—I believe I muft get you to fend me an attestation under your hand that you knew nothing of it, that Mr. Rigby may allow that at leaft this one room was by my own direction. As the library and great parlour grow finished, you fhall have exact notice.

¹ An Irifhwoman for a fhort time miftrefs to Louis XV.

From Mabland¹ I have little news to send you, but that the obelisk is danced from the middle of the rabbit-warren into his neighbour's garden, and he pays a ground-rent for looking at it there. His shrubs are hitherto unmolested,²

Et Maryboniacos³ gaudet revirescere lucos!

The town is as busy again as ever on the affair of Canning, who has been tried for perjury. The jury would have brought her in guilty of perjury, but not wilful, till the judge informed them that that would rather be an Irish verdict: they then brought her in simply guilty, but recommended her. In short, nothing is discovered: the most general opinion is that she was robbed, but by some other gipsy. For my own part, I am not at all brought to believe her story, nor shall, till I hear that living seven-and-twenty days without eating is among one of those secrets for doing impossibilities, which I suppose will be at last found out. You know my system is, that every thing will be found out, and about the time that I am dead, even some art of living for ever.

You was in pain for me, and indeed I was in pain for myself, on the prospect of the sale of Dr. Meade's miniatures. You may be easy; it is more than I am quite; for it is come out that the late prince of Wales had bought them every one.

I have not yet had time to have your granite examined, but will next week. If you have not noticed to your sisters any present of Ormer shells, I shall contradict myself, and accept them for my lady Lyttelton, who is making a grotto. As many as you can send conveniently, and any thing for the same use, will be very acceptable. You will laugh when I tell you that I am employed to reconcile sir George and Moore³: the latter has been very flippant, say impertinent, on the latter's giving a little place to Bower, in preference to him.—Think of my being the mediator!

¹ A cant name which Mr. Walpole had given to lord Radnor's whimsical house and grounds at Twickenham. E.

² Lord Radnor's garden was full of statues, &c. like that at Marybone.

³ Author of *The World*, and some plays and poems. Moore had written in defence of lord Lyttelton against the *Letters to the Whigs*, which were not known to be Mr. Walpole's.

The parliament is to meet for a few days the end of this month, to give perfection to the regency-bill. If the king dies before the end of this month, the old parliament revives, which would make tolerable confusion, considering what sums have been laid out on feats in this.—Adieu! This letter did not come kindly; I reckon it rather extorted from me, and therefore hope it will not amuse. However, I am in tolerable charity with you, and

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R IX.

Strawberry-hill, July 9, 1754.

I ONLY write a letter for company to the inclosed one. Mr. Chute is returned from the Vine, and gives you a thousand thanks for your letter; and if ever he writes, I don't doubt but it will be to you. Gray and he come hither to-morrow, and I am promised Montagu and the ¹ colonel in about a fortnight—How naturally my pen adds, but when does Mr. Bentley come? I am sure Mr. Wicks wants to ask me the same question every day—*Speak to it, Horatio!*—Sir Charles Williams brought his eldest daughter hither last week: she is one of your real admirers, and, without its being proposed to her, went on the bowling-green, and drew a perspective view of the castle from the angle, in a manner to deserve the thanks of the *committee*²: she is to be married to my lord Essex in a week, and I begged she would make you overseer of the works at Cashiobury. Sir Charles told me, that on the duke of Bedford's wanting a Chinese house at Woburn, he said, "Why don't your grace speak to Mr. Walpole? He has the prettiest plan in the world for one."—"Oh," replied the duke, "but then it would be too dear!" I hope this was very great œconomy, or I am sure ours would be very great extravagance—Only think of a plan for poor little Strawberry giving the alarm to thirty thousand pounds a year!—My dear sir, it is time

¹ Charles Montagu, brother of George, and afterwards general, and knight of the bath.

² Mr. Walpole in these letters calls the Straw-

berry committee, those of his friends who had assisted in the plans and Gothic ornaments of Strawberry-hill. E.

to retrench! Pray send me a slice of granite¹ no bigger than a Naples biscuit.

The monument for my mother is at last erected: it puts me in mind of the manner of interring the kings of France: when the reigning one dies, the last before him is buried. Will you believe that I have not yet seen the tomb? None of my acquaintance were in town, and I literally had not courage to venture alone among the Westminster-boys at the abbey; they are as formidable to me as the ship-carpenters at Portsmouth. I think I have showed you the inscription, and therefore I don't send it you.

I was reading t'other day the Life of colonel Codrington, who founded the library at All Souls: he left a large estate for the propagation of the gospel, and ordered that three hundred negroes should constantly be employed upon it: did one ever hear a more truly christian charity, than keeping up a perpetuity of three hundred slaves to look after the gospel's estate? How could one intend a religious legacy, and miss the disposition of that estate for delivering three hundred negroes from the most shocking slavery imaginable? Must devotion be twisted into the unfeeling interests of trade? I must revenge myself for the horror this fact has given me, and tell you a story of Gideon². He breeds his children christians: he had a mind to know what proficiencie his son had made in his new religion; so, says he, I began, and asked him, who made him? He said, God. I then asked him, who redeemed him? He replied very readily, Christ. Well, then I was at the end of my interrogatories, and did not know what other question to put to him—I said, Who—who—I did not know what to say—at last I said, Who gave you that hat? The holy ghost, said the boy.—Did you ever hear a better catechism?—The great cry against Nugent at Bristol was for having voted for the Jew bill: one old woman said, “What, must we be represented by a Jew and an Irishman?” He replied with great quickness, “My good dame, if you will step aside with me into a corner, I will show you that I am *not* a Jew, and that *I am* an Irishman.”

¹ Mr. Walpole had commissioned Mr. Bentley to send him a piece of the granite found in the island of Jersey, for a side-board in his dining-room. It is now at Strawberry-hill. E.

² Sampson Gideon, a noted rich Jew.

³ Of Wales.

The prince^s ¹ has breakfasted at the long fir Thomas Robinson's at Whitehall: my lady T—— will never forgive it. The second ² dowager of Somerset is gone to know whether all her letters from the living to the dead have been received. Before I bid you good-night, I must tell you of an admirable curiosity: I was looking over one of our antiquarian volumes, and in the description of Leeds is an account of Mr. Thoresby's famous museum there—What do you think is one of the rarities? *A knife taken from one of the Mohocks!* Whether *tradition is infallible or not*, as you say, I think so authentic a relique will make their history indisputable—Castles, Chinese houses, tombs, negroes, Jews, Irishmen, princesses, and Mohocks—what a farrago do I send you! I trust that a letter from England to Jersey has an imposing air, and that you don't presume to laugh at any thing that comes from your mother island. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER X.

Strawberry-hill, November 3, 1754.

I HAVE finished all my parties, and am drawing towards a conclusion here: the parliament meets in ten days: the house, I hear, will be extremely full—curiosity drawing as many to town as party used to do. The minister ³ in the house of lords is a new sight in these days.

Mr. Chute and I have been at Mr. Barret's ⁴ at Belhouse; I never saw a place for which one did not wish, so totally void of faults. What he has done is in Gothic, and very true, though not up to the perfection of the committee. The hall is pretty; the great dining-room hung with good family pictures; among which is his ancestor, the lord Dacre, who was hanged. I remember, when Barret was first initiated in the college of arms by the present dean of Exeter ⁵ at Cambridge, he was overjoyed at

¹ Of Wales.

² Frances Thynne.

³ The duke of Newcastle.

⁴ Afterwards lord Dacre.

⁵ Dr. Charles Lyttelton.

the first ancestor he *put up*, who was one of the murderers of Thomas Becket. The chimney-pieces, except one little miscarriage into total Ionic (he could not resist statuary and Siena marble), are all of a good king James the first Gothic. I saw the heronry so fatal to Po Yang, and told him that I was persuaded they were descended from Becket's assassin, and I hoped from my lord Dacre too. He carried us to see the famous plantations and buildings of the last lord Petre. They are the Brobdingnag of bad taste. The unfinished house is execrable, massive, and split through and through: it stands on the brow of a hill, rather to see *for* a prospect than to see one, and turns its back upon an outrageous avenue, which is closed with a screen of tall trees, because he would not be at the expence of beautifying the back front of his house. The clumps are gigantic, and very ill placed.

George Montagu and the colonel have at last been here, and have screamed with approbation through the whole *Cu-gamut*¹. Indeed the library is delightful. They went to the Vine, and approved as much. Do you think we wished for you? I carried down incense and mass-books, and we had most catholic enjoyment of the chapel. In the evenings, indeed, we did *touch a card*² a little to please George—so much, that truly I have scarce an idea left that is not spotted with clubs, hearts, spades and diamonds. There is a vote of the Strawberry committee for great embellishments to the chapel, of which it will not be long before you hear something. It will not be longer than the spring, I trust, before you see something of it. In the mean time, to rest your impatience, I have inclosed a scratch of mine, which you are to draw out better, and try if you can give yourself a perfect idea of the place. All I can say is, that my sketch is at least more intelligible than Gray's was of Stoke, from which you made so like a picture.

Thank you much for the box of Guernsey lilies, which I have received. I have been packing up a few seeds, which have little merit but the merit they will have with you, that they come from the Vine and Strawberry. My chief employ in this part of the world, except surveying my li-

¹ Mr. George Montagu, who used many odd expressions, called his own family the Montagu's *the Cu's*.

² An expression of Mr. Montagu's.

brary, which has scarce any thing but the painting to finish, is planting at Mrs. Clive's, whither I remove all my superabundancies. I have lately planted the green lane, that leads from her garden to the common: "Well," said she, "when it is done, what shall we call it?"—"Why," said I, "what would you call it but Drury-lane?" I mentioned desiring some samples of your Swiss's¹ abilities: Mr. Chute and I even propose, if he should be tolerable, and would continue reasonable, to tempt him over hither, and make him work upon your designs—upon which, you know, it is not easy to make you work. If he improves upon our hands, do you think we shall purchase the fee-simple of him for so many years, as Mr. Smith did of Canaletti²? We will *sell to the English*. Can he paint perspectives, and cathedral-iffes, and holy glooms? I am sure you could make him paint delightful insides of the chapel at the Vine, and of the library here. I never come up the stairs without reflecting how different it is from its primitive state, when my lady T. all the way she came up the stairs, cried out, "Lord God! Jesus! what a house! It is just such a house as a parson's, where the children lie at the feet of the bed!" I can't say that to-day it puts me much in mind of another speech of my lady's, "that it would be a very pleasant place, if Mrs. Clive's face did not rise upon it and make it so hot!" The sun and Mrs. Clive seem gone for the winter.

The West-Indian war has thrown me into a new study: I read nothing but American voyages, and histories of plantations and settlements. Among all the Indian nations, I have contracted a particular intimacy with the Ontaouanous, a people with whom I beg you will be acquainted: they pique themselves upon speaking the purest dialect. How one should delight in the grammar and dictionary of their *Crusca*! My only fear is, that if any of them are taken prisoners, general Braddock is not a kind of man to have proper attentions to so polite a people; I am even apprehensive that he would damn them, and order them to be scalped, in the very worst plantation-accent. I don't know whether you know that none of the people of that immense continent have any labials: they tell you *que c'est ridicule* to shut the lips, in order to speak. Indeed I was as barbarous as any polite nation in the world, in supposing that there was nothing worth knowing

¹ Mr. Muntz, a Swiss painter.

² Mr. Smith, the English consul at Venice, years to paint exclusively for him, at a fixed price, and sold his pictures at an advanced price had engaged Canaletti for a certain number of to English travellers. E.

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among these charming savages. They are in particular great orators, with this little variation from British eloquence, that at the end of every important paragraph they make a present; whereas we expect to receive one. They begin all their answers with recapitulating what has been said to them; and their method for this is, the respondent gives a little stick to each of the by-standers, who is, for his share, to remember such a paragraph of the speech that is to be answered. You will wonder that I should have given the preference to the Ontaouanous, when there is a much more extraordinary nation to the north of Canada, who have but one leg, and p— from behind their ear; but I own I had rather converse for any time with people who speak like Mr. Pitt, than with a nation of jugglers, who are only fit to go about the country, under the direction of T— and M—. Their existence I do not doubt; they are recorded by Pere Charlevoix, in his much admired history of New France, in which there are such outrageous legends of miracles for the propagation of the gospel, that his fables in natural history seem strict veracity.

Adieu! You write to me as seldom as if you were in an island where the duke of N. was sole minister, parties at an end, and where every thing had done happening.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I have just seen in the advertisements that there are arrived two new volumes of madame de Sevigné's Letters.—Adieu, my American studies!—adieu, even my favourite Ontaouanous!

LETTER XI.

Arlington-street, Nov. 11, 1754.

IF you was dead, to be sure you would have got somebody to tell me so. If you was alive, to be sure in all this time you would have told me so yourself. It is a month to-day since I received a line from you. There was a Florentine ambassador here in Oliver's reign, who with great circumspection

¹ Two English gentlemen who were shut up in Fort l'Evêque for cheating a Jew.

wrote

wrote to his court, "Some say the protector is dead, others say he is not: for my part, I believe neither one nor t'other." I quote this sage personage, to show you that I have a good precedent, in case I had a mind to continue neutral upon the point of your existence. I can't resolve to believe you dead, lest I should be forced to write to Mr. S. again to bemoan you; and on the other hand, it is convenient to me to believe you living, because I have just received the inclosed from your sister, and the money from Ely. However, if you are actually dead, be so good as to order your executor to receive the money and to answer your sister's letter. If you are not dead, I can tell you who is, and at the same time whose death is to remain as doubtful as yours till to-morrow morning. Don't be alarmed! it is only the queen dowager of Prussia. As *excessive* as the concern for her is at court, the whole royal family, out of great consideration for the mercers, lacemen, &c. agreed not to shed a tear for her till to-morrow morning, when the birth-day will be over; but they are all to rise by six o'clock to-morrow morning to cry quarts. This is the sum of all the news that I learnt to-day on coming from Strawberry-hill, except that lady Betty Waldegrave was robbed t'other night in Hyde-park, under the very noses of the lamps and the patrol. If any body is robbed at the ball at court to-night, you shall hear in my next dispatch. I told you in my last that I had just got two new volumes of madame Sevigné's letters; but I have been cruelly disappointed; they are two hundred letters which had been omitted in the former editions, as having little or nothing worth reading. How provoking, that they would at last let one see that she could write so many letters that were not worth reading! I will tell you the truth: as they are certainly hers, I am glad to see them, but I cannot bear that any body else should. Is not that true sentiment? How would you like to see a letter of hers, describing a wild young Irish lord, a lord P——, who has lately made one of our ingenious wagers, to ride I don't know how many thousand miles in an hour, from Paris to Fontainebleau? But admire the politesse of that nation: instead of endeavouring to lame his horse, or to break his neck, that he might lose the wager, his antagonist and the spectators showed all the attention in the world to keep the road clear, and to remove even pebbles out of his way. They heaped coals of fire upon his head with all the good-breeding of the gospel. Adieu!—If my letters are short, at least my notes are long.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XII.

Arlington-street, November 20, 1754.

IF this does not turn out a scolding letter, I am much mistaken. I shall give way to it with the less scruple, as I think it shall be the last of the kind; not that you will mend, but I cannot support a commerce of visions! and therefore, whenever you send me mighty cheap schemes for finding out longitudes and philosophers' stones, you will excuse me if I only smile, and don't order them to be examined by my council.—For heaven's sake, don't be a projector! Is not it provoking, that, with the best parts in the world, you should have so gentle a portion of common sense? But I am clear, that you never will know the two things in the world that import you the most to know, yourself and me.—Thus much by way of preface: now for the detail.

You tell me in your letter of November 3d, that the quarry of granite might be rented at twenty pounds or twenty shillings, I don't know which, no matter, per annum. When I can't get a table out of it, is it very likely you or I should get a fortune out of it? What signifies the cheapness of the rent? The cutting and shippage would be articles of some little consequence! Who should be supervisor? You, who are so good a manager, so attentive, so diligent, so expeditious, and so accurate? Don't you think our quarry would turn to account? Another article, to which I might apply the same questions, is the project for importation of French wine: it is odd that a scheme so cheap and so practicable should hitherto have been totally overlooked—One would think the breed of smugglers was lost, like the true spaniels, or genuine golden pippins! My dear sir, you know I never drink three glasses of any wine—Can you think I care whether they are sour or sweet, cheap or dear?—or do you think that I, who am always taking trouble to reduce my trouble into as compact a volume as I can, would tap such an article as importing my own wine? But now comes your last proposal about the Gothic paper. When you made me fix up mine, unpainted, engaging to paint it yourself, and yet could never be persuaded to paint a yard of it, till I was forced to give Bromwich's man God knows what to do it, would you make me believe that you will paint a room eighteen feet by fifteen?—But, seriously, if it is possible for you to lay

lay aside visions, don't be throwing continual discouragements in my way. I have told you seriously and emphatically, that I am labouring your restoration: the scheme is neither facile nor immediate:—but, for God's sake, act like a reasonable man. You have a family to whom you owe serious attention. Don't let me think, that if you return, you will set out upon every wild-goose chase, sticking to nothing, and neglecting chiefly the talents and genius which you have in such excellence, to start projects, which you have too much honesty and too little application ever to thrive by. This advice is, perhaps, worded harshly: but you know the heart from which it proceeds, and you know that, with all my prejudice to it, I can't even pardon your wit, when it is employed to dress up schemes that I think romantic. The glasses and Ray's Proverbs you shall have, and some more gold-fish, when I have leisure to go to Strawberry; for you know I don't suffer any fisheries to be carried on there in my absence.

I am as newsless as in the dead of summer: the parliament produces nothing but elections: there has already been one division on the Oxfordshire of two hundred and sixty-seven whigs to ninety-seven tories: you may calculate the burial of that election easily from these numbers. The queen of Prussia is not dead, as I told you in my last. If you have shed many tears for her, you may set them off to the account of our son-in-law the Prince of Hesse, who is turned Roman catholic. One is in this age so unused to conversions above the rank of a house-maid turned methodist, that it occasions as much surprise as if one had heard that he had been initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries. Are not you prodigiously alarmed for the protestant interest in Germany?

We have operas, burlettas, cargoes of Italian dancers, and none good but the Mingotti, a very fine figure and actresses. I don't know a single bon-mot that is new: George Selwyn has not waked yet for the winter. You will believe that, when I tell you, that t'other night having lost eight hundred pounds at hazard, he fell asleep upon the table with near half as much more before him, and slept for three hours, with every body stamping the box close at his ear. He will say prodigiously good things when he does wake. In the mean time can you be *content* with one of madame Sevigné's best bons-mots, which I have found amongst her new letters? Do you remember her German friend the princess of Tarente, who was
always

always in mourning for some fovereign prince or princefs ? One day madame de Sevigné happening to meet her in colours, made her low curtfey, and faid, "*Madame, je me rejouis de la fanté de l'Europe.*" I think I may apply another of her fpeeches, which pleased me, to what I have faid to you in the former part of my letter. Mademoifelle du Pleffis had faid something ſhe difapproved : madame Sevigné faid to her, "*Mais que cela eſt fot, car je veux vous parler doucement.*" Adieu !

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XIII.

Arlington-street, Friday, December 13, 1754.

" IF we do not make this effort to recover our dignity, we ſhall only fit here to register the arbitrary edicts of one too powerful a ſubject !" — Non riconoſci tu l'altéro viſo ? Don't you at once know the ſtyle ? Shake thoſe words all altogether, and ſee if they can be any thing but the diſjecti membra of Pitt ! — In ſhort, about a fortnight ago, this bomb burſt. Pitt, who is well, is married, is diſſatisfied — not with his bride, but with the duke of N. has twice thundered out his diſſatisfaction in parliament, and was ſeconded by Fox. The event was exactly what I dare ſay you have already foreſeen. Pitt *was to be* turned out ; overtures were made to Fox ; Pitt is *not* turned out ; Fox is quieted with the dignity of cabinet-counſellor, and the duke of N. remains affronted — and omnipotent. The commentary on this text is too long for a letter ; it may be developed ſome time or other. This ſcene has produced a diverting interlude : fir George Lyttelton, who could not reconcile his content with Mr. Pitt's diſcontents, has been very ill with the couſinhood. In the grief of his heart he thought of reſigning his place ; but, *ſomehow or other*, ſtumbled upon a negotiation for introducing the duke of Bedford into the miniſtry again, to balance the loſs of Mr. Pitt. Whatever perſuaded him, he thought this treaty ſo ſure of ſucceſs, that he loſt no time to be the agent of it himſelf ; and whether commiſſioned or non-commiſſioned, as both he and the duke of N. ſay, he carried carte blanche to the duke of B. who

bounced like a rocket, frightened away poor sir George, and sent for Mr. Pitt to notify the overture. Pitt and the Grenvilles are outrageous; the duke of N. disclaims his embassador, and every body laughs. Sir George came hither yesterday, to *expectorate* with me, as he called it. Think how I pricked up my ears, as high as king Midas, to hear a Lyttelton vent his grievances against a Pitt and Grenvilles! Lord Temple has named sir George the *apostolic nuntio*; and George Selwyn says, "that he will certainly be invited by miss A. among the foreign ministers." These are greater storms than perhaps you expected yet: they have occasioned mighty bustle, and whisper, and speculation; but you see

Pulveris exigui jactu composita quiescunt!

You will be diverted with a collateral incident. — met Dick Edgecumbe, and asked him with great importance if he knew whether Mr. Pitt was out. Edgecumbe, who thinks nothing important that is not to be decided by dice, and who consequently had never once thought of Pitt's political state, replied, "Yes."—"Ay! how do you know?"—"Why, I called at his door just now, and his porter told me so." Another political event is, that lord E. comes into place; he is to succeed lord Fitzwalter, who is to have lord Grantham's pension, who is dead immensely rich—I think this is the last of the old opposition of any name except sir John Bernard—If you have curiosity about the Ohio, you must write to France: there I believe they know something about it: here it was totally forgot, till last night, when an express arrived with an account of the loss of one of the transports off Falmouth, with eight officers and sixty men on board.

My lady T. has been dying, and was wofully frightened, and *took* prayers; but she is recovered now, even of her repentance. You will not be undiverted to hear that the mob of Sudbury have literally sent a *card* to the mob of Bury, to offer their assistance at a contested election there: I hope to be able to tell you in my next that Mrs. H. has sent cards to both mobs for her assembly¹.

¹ Of this lady Mr. Walpole in a letter to another correspondent gives the following account: "You would be diverted with a Mrs. H—, whose passion is keeping an assembly and inviting literally every body to it. She goes to the drawing-room to watch for sneezes, whips out a curtsey, and then sends next morning to know how your cold does, and desire your company on Thursday." E.

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The shrubs shall be sent, but you must stay till the holidays; I shall not have time to go to Strawberry sooner. I have received your second letter, dated November 22d, about the Gothic paper. I hope you will by this time have got mine, to dissuade you from that thought. If you insist upon it, I will send the paper: I have told you what I think, and will therefore say no more on that head; but I will transcribe a passage which I found t'other day in Petronius, and thought not unapplicable to you: "Omnium herbarum succos Democritus expresse; & ne lapidum virgultorumque vis lateret, ætatem inter experimenta consumpsit." I hope Democritus could not draw charmingly, when he threw away his time in extracting tints from flints and twigs!

I can't conclude my letter without telling you what an escape I had at the sale of Dr. Meade's library, which goes extremely dear. In the catalogue I saw Winstanley's views of Audley-inn, which I concluded was, as it really was, a thin dirty folio worth about fifteen shillings. As I thought it might be scarce, it might run to two or three guineas: however, I bid Graham *certainly* buy it for me. He came the next morning in a great fright, said he did not know whether he had done very right or very wrong, that he had gone as far as *nine-and-forty guineas*—I started in such a fright! Another bookseller had luckily had as unlimited a commission, and bid fifty—when my Graham begged it might be adjourned, till they could consult their principals. I think I shall never give an unbounded commission again, even for views of *Les Rochers**! Adieu! Am I ever to see any more of your *hand-drawing*? Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R XIV.

Strawberry-hill, December 24, 1754.

MY DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your packet of December 6th, last night, but intending to come hither for a few days, had unluckily sent away by the coach in the

* Madame de Sevigné's seat in Bretagne.

morning.

morning a parcel of things for you; you must therefore wait till another bundle sets out, for the new letters of madame Sevigné. Heaven forbid that I should have said they were bad! I only meant that they were full of family details, and mortal distempers, to which the most immortal of us are subject; and I was sorry that the profane should ever know that my divinity was ever troubled with a fore leg, or the want of money; though indeed the latter defeats Buffy's ill-natured accusation of avarice; and her tearing herself from her daughter, then at Paris, to go and save money in Bretagne to pay her debts, is a perfection of virtue which completes her amiable character. My lady Hervey has made me most happy, by bringing me from Paris an admirable copy of the very portrait that was madame de Simiane's: I am going to build an altar for it, under the title of *Notre Dame des Rochers*!

Well! but you will want to know the contents of the parcel that is set out. It contains another parcel, which contains I don't know what; but Mr. C—— sent it, and desired I would transmit it to you. There are Ray's Proverbs in two volumes interleaved; a few seeds, mislaid when I sent the last; a very indifferent new tragedy, called *Barbarossa*, now running, the ¹ author unknown, but believed to be Garrick himself: there is not one word of *Barbarossa*'s real story, but almost the individual history of Merope; not one new thought, and, which is the next material want, but one line of perfect nonsense;

And rain down transports in the shape of sorrow.

To complete it, the manners are so ill observed, that a Mahometan princess royal is at full liberty to visit her lover in Newgate, like the banker's daughter in *George Barnwell*. I have added four more *Worlds*², the second of which will, I think, redeem my lord Chesterfield's character with you for wit, except in the two stories, which are very flat: I mean those of two mispelt letters. In the last *World*³, besides the hand, you will find a story of your acquaintance: *Bancaur* means Norborne Berkeley, whose horse sinking up to his middle in Woburn-park, he would not allow that it

¹ It was written by Dr. Browne.

² Numbers 92, 98, 100, and 101 of the third volume of that periodical paper.

³ Number 103 by Mr. Walpole.

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was any thing more than a little damp. The last story of a highwayman happened almost literally to Mrs. Cavendish.

For news, I think I have none to tell you. Mr. Pitt is gone to the Bath, and Mr. Fox to Newcastle-house; and every body else into the country for the holidays. When lord Bath was told of the first determination of turning out Pitt, and letting Fox remain, he said, it put him in mind of a story of the gunpowder plot. The lord chamberlain was sent to examine the vaults under the parliament-house, and, returning with his report, said, he had found five-and-twenty barrels of gunpowder; that he had removed ten of them, and hoped the other fifteen would do no harm—Was ever any thing so well and so just?

The Russian ambassador is to give a masquerade for the birth of the little great prince¹: the king lends him Somerset-house: he wanted to borrow the palace over against me, and sent to ask it of the cardinal-nephew², who replied, “Not for half Russia.”

The new madness is Oratorys. Macklin has set up one, under the title of The British Inquisition: Foote another, against him: and a third man has advertised another to-day. I have not heard enough in their favour to tempt me to them: nor do I in the world know enough to compose another paragraph. I am here quite alone; Mr. Chute is setting out for his Vine; but in a day or two I expect Mr. Williams³, George Selwyn, and Dick Edgecumbe. You will allow that when I do admit any body within my cloister, I choose them well. My present occupation is putting up my books; and thanks to arches, and pinnacles, and pierced columns, I shall not appear scantily provided! Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ The present czar, Paul I.

² Henry earl of Lincoln, nephew to the duke of Newcastle, to whose title he succeeded.

³ George James Williams, esq.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

Arlington-street, January 9, 1755.

I USED to say that one could not go out of London for two days, without finding at one's return that something very extraordinary had happened; but of late the climate had lost its propensity to odd accidents. Madneſs be praised, we are a little restored to the want of our ſenſes! I have been twice this Chriſtmas at Strawberry-hill for a few days, and at each return have been not a little ſurpriſed: the firſt time, at the very unexpected death of my lord Albemarle, who was taken ill at Paris, going home from ſupper, and expired in a few hours; and laſt week at the far more extraordinary death of ——. He himſelf, with all his judgment in bets, I think would have betted any man in England againſt himſelf for ſelf-murder: yet after having been ſuppoſed the ſharpeſt genius of his time, he, by all that appears, ſhot himſelf on the diſtreſs of his circumſtances; an apoplectic diſpoſition I believe concurring, either to lower his ſpirits, or to alarm them. Ever ſince miſs —— lived with him, either from liking her himſelf, as ſome think, or to tempt her to marry his lilliputian figure, he has ſquandered vaſt ſums at ——, and in living. He loſt twelve hundred a year by lord Albemarle's death, and four by lord Gage's, the ſame day. He aſked immediately for the government of Virginia or the Foxhounds, and preſſed for an answer with an eagerneſs that ſurpriſed the duke of N. who never had a notion of pinning down the relief of his own or any other man's wants to a day. Yet that ſeems to have been the caſe of ——, who determined to throw the die of life or death, Tueſday was ſe'nnight, on the answer he was to receive from court; which did not prove favourable. He conſulted indirectly, and at laſt pretty directly, ſeveral people on the eaſieſt method of finiſhing life; and ſeems to have thought that he had been too explicit; for he invited company to dinner for the day after his death, and ordered a ſupper at White's; where he ſupped too the night before. He played at whiſk till one in the morning; it was new year's morning: lord Robert Bertie drank to him a happy new year; he clapped his hand ſtrangely to his eyes! In the morning he had a lawyer and three witneſſes, and executed his will, which he made them read twice over, paragraph by paragraph: and then aſking the lawyer, if that will would ſtand good, though a man were to ſhoot himſelf? and being aſſured it would; he ſaid, "*Pray ſtay while I*

R r 2

ſtep

step into next room;”—went into next room, and shot himself. He clapped the pistol so close to his head, that they heard no report. The housekeeper heard him fall, and, thinking he had a fit, ran up with drops, and found his skull and brains shot about the room!—You will be charmed with the friendship and generosity of sir —. — a little time since opened his circumstances to him. Sir — said, “—, if it will be of any service to you, you shall see what I have done for you;” pulled out his will, and read it, where he had left him a vast legacy. The beauty of this action is heightened by sir —’s life not being worth a year’s purchase. I own I feel for the distress this man must have felt, before he decided on so desperate an action. I knew him but little; but he was good-natured and agreeable enough, and had the most compendious understanding I ever knew. He had affected a finess in money matters beyond what he deserved, and aimed at reducing even natural affections to a kind of calculations like Demoivre’s. He was asked, soon after his daughter’s marriage, if she was with child:—He replied, “Upon my word, I don’t know; I have no bet upon it.” This and poor —’s self-murder have brought to light another, which happening in France had been sunk; —’s. I can tell you that the ancient and worshipful company of lovers are under a great dilemma, upon a husband and a gamester killing themselves: I don’t know whether they will not apply to parliament for an exclusive charter for self-murder.

On the occasion of —’s story, I heard another more extraordinary. If a man insures his life, this killing himself vacates the bargain. This (as in England almost every thing begets a contradiction) has produced an office for insuring in spite of self-murder; but not beyond three hundred pounds. I suppose voluntary deaths were not then the bon-ton of people in higher life. A man went and insured his life, securing this privilege of a *free-dying* Englishman. He carried the insurers to dine at a tavern, where they met several other persons. After dinner he said to the life-and-death-brokers, “Gentlemen, it is fit that you should be acquainted with the company: these honest men are tradesmen, to whom I was in debt, without any means of paying, but by your assistance; and now I am your humble servant!” He pulled out a pistol and shot himself. Did you ever hear of such a mixture of honesty and knavery?

Lord Rochford is to succeed as groom of the stole. The duke of Marlborough is privy-seal, in the room of lord Gower, who is dead; and the duke

duke of Rutland is lord steward. Lord Albemarle's other offices and honours are still in petto. When the king first saw this lord Albemarle, he said, "Your father had a great many good qualities, but he was a freve!"—It is the last receiver into which I should have thought his majesty would have poured gold! You will be pleased with the monarch's politesse. Sir John Bland and Offley made interest to play at twelfth-night, and succeeded—not at play, for they lost 1400*l.* and 1300*l.* As it is not usual for people of no higher rank to play, the king thought they would be bashful about it, and took particular care to do the honours of his house to them, set only to them, and spoke to them at his levee next morning.

You love new nostrums and inventions: there is discovered a method of inoculating the cattle for the distemper—it succeeds so well that they are not even marked. How we advance rapidly in discoveries, and in applying every thing to every thing! Here is another secret, that will better answer your purpose, and I hope mine too. They found out lately at the duke of Argyle's, that any kind of ink may be made of privet: it becomes green ink by mixing salt of tartar. I don't know the process; but I am promised it by Campbell, who told me of it t'other day, when I carried him the true genealogy of the Bentleys, which he assured me shall be inserted in the next edition of the Biographia.

There sets out to-morrow morning, by the Southampton waggon, such a cargo of trees for you, that a detachment of Kentishmen would be furnished against an invasion if they were to unroll the bundle. I write to Mr. S—to recommend great care of them. Observe how I answer your demands: are you as punctual? The forests in your landscapes do not thrive like those in your letters. Here is a letter from G. Montagu; and then I think I may bid you good-night!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

310 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

LETTER XVI.

Arlington-street, Feb. 8, 1755.

MY DEAR SIR,

BY the waggon on Thursday there set out for Southampton, a lady whom you must call *Phillis*, but whom George Montagu and the Gods would name *Speckle-belly*. Peter begged her for me, that is for you, that is, for captain Dumaresque, after he had been asked three guineas for another. I hope she will not be poisoned with salt-water, like the poor Poyangers¹. If she should, you will at least observe, that your commissions are not still-born with me, as mine are with you. I *draw*² a spotted dog the moment you desire it.

George Montagu has intercepted the description I promised you of the Russian masquerade: he wrote to beg it, and I cannot transcribe from myself. In few words, there were all the beauties, and all the diamonds, and not a few of the uglies of London. The duke³, like Osman the third, seemed in the centre of his new seraglio, and I believe my lady and I thought that my lord — was the chief eunuch. My lady Coventry was dressed in a great style, and looked better than ever. Lady Betty Spencer, like Rubens's wife (not the common one with the hat), had all the bloom and bashfulness and wildness of youth, with all the countenance of all the former Marlboroughs. Lord Delawar was an excellent mask, from a picture at Kensington of queen Elizabeth's porter. Lady Caroline Petersham, powdered with diamonds and crescents for a Turkish slave, was still extremely handsome. The hazard was excessively deep; to the astonishment of some Frenchmen of quality who are here, and who I believe, from what they saw that night, will not write to their court to dissuade their armaments, on its not being worth their while to attack so beggarly a nation. Our fleet is as little despicable; but though the preparations on both sides are so great, I believe the storm will blow over. They insist on our immediately sending an ambassador to Paris; and to my great satisfaction, my cousin and friend lord Hertford is to be the man. This is still an entire secret here, but will be known before you receive this.

The weather is very bitter, and keeps me from Strawberry. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Mr. Walpole having called his gold-fish-pond *Poyang*, calls the gold-fish *Poyangers*. E.

² Alluding to Mr. Bentley's dilatoriness in exercising his pencil at the request of Mr. Walpole.

³ William, duke of Cumberland.

TO RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

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LETTER XVII.

Arlington-street, Feb. 23, 1755-

MY DEAR SIR,

YOUR *Argosie* is arrived safe; thank you for shells, trees, cones; but above all, thank you for the landscape^r. As it is your first attempt in oils, and has succeeded so much beyond my expectation (and being against my advice too, you may believe the sincerity of my praises), I must indulge my *Vasarihood*, and write a dissertation upon it. You have united and mellowed your colours, in a manner to make it look like an old picture; yet there is something in the tone of it, that is not quite right. Mr. Chute thinks that you should have exerted more of your force in tipping with light the edges on which the sun breaks: my own opinion is, that the result of the whole is not natural, by your having joined a Claude Lorrain summer sky to a wintry sea, which you have drawn from the life. The water breaks finely, but the distant hills are too strong, and the outlines much too hard. The greatest fault is the trees (not apt to be your stumbling-block): they are not of a natural green, have no particular resemblance, and are out of all proportion too large for the figures. Mend these errors, and work away in oil. I am impatient to see some Gothic ruins of your painting. This leads me naturally to thank you for the sweet little cul-de-lampe to the entail: it is equal to any thing you have done in perspective and for taste; but the boy is too large.

For the block of granite I shall certainly think a louis well bestowed—provided I do but get the block, and that you are sure it will be equal to the sample you sent me. My room remains in want of a table; and as it will take so much time to polish it, I do wish you would be a little expeditious in sending it.

I have but frippery-news to tell you; no politics; for the rudiments of a war, that is not to be a war, are not worth detailing. In short, we have acted with spirit, have got ready 30 ships of the line, and conclude that the French will not care to examine whether they are well manned or not. The house of commons *bears* nothing but elections; the Oxfordshire till seven at

It is now at Strawberry-hill.

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night three times a week : we have passed ten evenings on the Colchester election, and last Monday sat upon it till near two in the morning. Whoever stands a contested election, and pays for his seat, and attends the first session, surely buys the other six very dear !

The great event is the catastrophe of Sir ———, who has *flirted* away his whole fortune at hazard. He t'other night exceeded what was lost by the late duke of Bedford, having at one period of the night (though he recovered the greatest part of it) lost two-and-thirty thousand pounds. The citizens put on their double-channeled pumps and trudge to St. James's-street, in expectation of seeing judgments executed on White's—angels with flaming swords, and devils flying away with dice-boxes, like the prints in Sadeler's Hermits. Sir ——— lost this immense sum to a captain ———, who at present has nothing but a few debts and his commission.

Garrick has produced a detestable English opera, which is crowded by all true lovers of their country. To mark the opposition to Italian operas, it is sung by some cast fingers, two Italians, and a French girl, and the chapel boys ; and to regale us with sense, it is Shakespeare's Midsummer-Night's Dream, which is forty times more nonsensical than the worst translation of any Italian opera-books— But such sense and such harmony are irresistible !

I am at present confined with a cold, which I caught by going to a fire in the middle of the night, and in the middle of the snow, two days ago. About five in the morning Harry waked me with a candle in his hand, and cried, " Pray, your honour, don't be frightened ! " " No, Harry, I am not ; but what is it that I am not to be frightened at ? " " There is a great fire here in St. James's-street. "—I rose, and indeed thought all St. James's-street was on fire, but it proved in Bury-street. However, you know I can't resist going to a fire ; for it is certainly the only horrid sight that is fine. I slipped on my slippers, and an embroidered suit that hung on the chair, and ran to Bury-street, and stepped into a pipe that was broken up for water—It would have made a picture—the horror of the flames, the snow, the day breaking with difficulty through so foul a night, and my figure, *party per pale*, mud and gold. It put me in mind of lady Margaret Herbert's providence, who asked somebody for a *pretty* pattern for a night-cap. Lord, said they, what signifies the pattern of a night-cap ?—" Oh, child, said she, but you know, in case
of

of fire." There were two houses burnt, and a poor maid; an officer jumped out of window, and is much hurt, and two young beauties were conveyed out the same way in their shifts. There have been two more great fires. Alderman Belchier's house at Epfom, that belonged to the prince, is burnt, and Beckford's fine house in the country, with pictures and furniture to a great value. He says, "Oh! I have an odd fifty thousand pounds in a drawer: I will build it up again: it won't be above a thousand pounds apiece difference to my thirty children." Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVIII.

Arlington-street, March 6, 1755.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE to thank you for two letters and a picture. I hope my thanks will have a more prosperous journey than my own letters have had of late. You say you have received none since January 9th. I have written three since that. I take care, in conjunction with the times, to make them harmless enough for the post. Whatever secrets I may have (and you know I have no propensity to mystery) will keep very well till I have the happiness of seeing you, though that date should be farther off than I hope. As I mean my letters should relieve some of your anxious or dull minutes, I will tempt no post-masters or secretaries to retard them.

The state of affairs is much altered since my last epistle that persuaded you of the distance of a war. So haughty and so ravenous an answer came from France, that my lord Hertford does not go. As a *little* islander, you may be very easy: Jersey is not prey for such fleets as are likely to encounter in the channel in April. You must tremble in your *Bigendian* capacity, if you mean to figure as a good citizen. I sympathize with you extremely in the interruption it will give to our correspondence. You, in an inactive little spot, cannot wish more impatiently for every post that has the probability of a letter, than I, in all the turbulence of London, do constantly, never-faillingly, for letters from you. Yet by my busy, hurried,

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ried,

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ried, amused, irregular way of life, you would not imagine that I had much time to care for my friends. You know how late I used to rise: it is worse and worse: I stay late at debates and committees; for, with all our tranquillity and my indifference, I think I am never out of the house of commons: from thence, it is the fashion of the winter to go to vast assemblies, which are followed by vast suppers, and those by balls. Last week I was from two at noon till ten at night at the house: I came home, dined, new dressed myself entirely, went to a ball at lord Holderness's, and staid till five in the morning. What an abominable young creature! But why may not I be so? Old Haslang dances at sixty-five; my lady Rochford without stays, and her husband the new groom of the stole, dance. In short, when secretaries of state, cabinet counsellors, foreign ministers, dance like the universal ballet in the Rehearsal, why should not I—see them? In short, the true definition of me is, that I am a dancing senator—Not that I do dance, or do any thing by being a senator: but I go to balls, and to the house of commons—to look on: and you will believe me when I tell you, that I really think the former the more serious occupation of the two; at least the performers are most in earnest. What men say to women, is at least as sincere as what they say to their country. If perjury can give the devil a right to the souls of men, he has titles by as many ways as my lord—is descended from Edward the third.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE,

LETTER XIX.

Arlington-street, March 27, 1755.

YOUR chimney^{*} is come, but not to honour: the cariatides are fine and free, but the rest is heavy: lord Strafford is not at all struck with it, and thinks it old-fashioned: it certainly tastes of Inigo Jones. Your myrtles I have seen in their pots, and they are magnificent, but I fear very sickly. In return I send you a library. You will receive some time or other, or

* A design for a chimney-piece, which, at Mr. Walpole's desire, Mr. Bentley had made for lord Strafford.

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the French for you, the following books: a fourth volume of Doddsley's Collection of Poems, the worst tome of the four; three volumes of Worlds; Fielding's Travels, or rather an account how his dropsy was treated and teased by an inn-keeper's wife in the Isle of Wight; the new Letters of madame de Sevigné; and Hume's History of Great Britain; a book which, though more decried than ever book was, and certainly with faults, I cannot help liking much. It is called Jacobite—but in my opinion is only not *George-abite*: where others abuse the Stuarts, he laughs at them: I am sure he does not spare their ministers. Harding, who has the History of England at the ends of his parliament fingers, says, that the Journals will contradict most of his facts. If it is so, I am sorry; for his style, which is the best we have in history, and his manner, imitated from Voltaire, are very pleasing. He has showed very clearly that we ought to quarrel originally with queen Elizabeth's tyranny for most of the errors of Charles the first. As long as he is willing to sacrifice some royal head, I would not much dispute with him which it should be. I incline every day to lenity, as I see more and more that it is being very partial to think worse of some men than of others. If I was a king myself, I dare say I should cease to love a republic. My lady ——— desired me, t'other day, to give her a motto for a ruby ring, which had been given by a handsome woman of quality to a fine man: he gave it to his mistress, she to lord ———, he to my lady; who, I think, does not deny that it has not yet finished its travels. I excused myself for some time, on the difficulty of reducing such a history to a poesy—at last I proposed this:

This was given by woman to man—and by man to woman.

Are you most impatient to hear of a French war, or the event of the Mitchell election? If the former is uppermost in your thoughts, I can tell you, you are very unfashionable. The whigs and tories in Rome, Athens, and Jerusalem, never forgot national points with more zeal, to attend to private faction, than we have lately. After triumphs repeated in the committee, lord Sandwich and Mr. Fox were beaten largely on the report. It was a most extraordinary day! The tories, who could not trust one another for two hours, had their last consult at the Horn Tavern just before the report, and all but nine or ten voted in a body (with the duke of Newcastle) against agreeing to it: then sir John Philipps, one of them, moved for a void election, but was deserted by most of his clan. We now

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begin to turn our hands to foreign war. In the rebellion, the ministry was so unsettled, that nobody seemed to care who was king. Power is now so established, that I must do the engrossers the justice to say, that they seem to be determined that *their own king* shall continue so. Our fleet is great and well manned; we are raising men and money, and messages have been sent to both houses from St. James's, which have been answered by very zealous *cards*. In the mean time, sturdy mandates are arrived from France; however, with a codicil of moderation, and power to Mirepoix still to treat. He was told briskly—"Your terms must come speedily; the fleets will sail very quickly; war cannot then be avoided."

I have passed five entire days lately at doctor Meade's sale, where, however, I bought very little: as extravagantly as he paid for every thing, his name has even refold them with interest. Lord Rockingham gave two hundred and thirty guineas for the Antinous—the dearest bust that, I believe, was ever sold; yet the nose and chin were repaired, and very ill. Lord Exeter bought the Homer for one hundred and thirty. I must tell you a piece of fortune: I supped the first night of the sale at Bedford-house, and found my lord Gower dealing at silver pharaoh to the women. "Oh!" said I laughing, "I laid out six-and-twenty pounds this morning, I will try if I can win it back;" and threw a shilling upon a card: in five minutes I won a 500-leva, which was twenty-five pounds eleven shillings. I have formerly won a 1000-leva, and another 500-leva.—With such luck, shall not I be able to win you back again?

Last Wednesday I gave a feast in form to the H——s. There was the duke of Grafton, lord and lady Hertford, Mr. Conway, and lady A. In short, all the Conways in the world, my lord Orford, and the Churchills. We dined in the drawing-room below stairs, amidst the Eagle, Vespasian, &c. You never saw so Roman a banquet; but with all my virtù, the bridegroom seemed the most venerable piece of antiquity. Good-night! The books go to Southampton on Monday.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

Strawberry-hill, April 13, 1755.

IF I did not think that you would expect to hear often from me at so critical a season, I should certainly not write to you to-night: I am here alone, out of spirits, and not well. In short, I have depended too much upon my constitution being like

Grafs, that escapes the scythe by being low;

and having nothing of the oak in the sturdiness of my stature, I imagined that my mortality would remain pliant as long as I pleased. But I have taken so little care of myself this winter, and kept such bad hours, that I have brought a slow fever upon my nights, and am worn to a skeleton: Bethel has plump cheeks to mine. However, as it would be unpleasant to die just at the beginning of a war, I am taking exercise and air, and much sleep, and intend to see Troy taken. The prospect thickens: there are certainly above twelve thousand men at the isle of Rhè; some say twenty thousand. An express was yesterday dispatched to Ireland, where it is supposed the storm will burst; but unless our fleet can disappoint the embarkation, I don't see what service the notification can do: we have quite disgraced that kingdom of troops; and if they once land, ten thousand men may walk from one end of the island to the other. It begins to be thought that the K. will not go abroad: that he cannot, every body has long thought. You will be entertained with a prophecy which my lord Chesterfield has found in the 35th chapter of Ezekiel, which clearly promises us victory over the French, and expressly relates to this war, as it mentions the two countries (Nova Scotia and Acadia) which are the point in dispute. You will have no difficulty in allowing that *mounseer* is typical enough of France: except Cyrus, who is the only heathen prince mentioned by his right name, and that before he had any name, I know no power so expressly described.

2. Son of man, set thy face against *Mount Seir*, and prophesy against it.

3. And say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, *O Mount Seir*, I am against thee; and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate.

4. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, &c.

10. Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it, &c.

I am disposed to put great trust in this prediction; for I know few things more in our favour. You will ask me naturally, what is to become of you? Are you to be left to all the chance of war, the uncertainty of packets, the difficulty of remittance, the increase of prices?—My dear sir, do you take me for a prime minister, who acquaints the *states* that they are in damned danger, when it is about a day too late? Or shall I order my *chancellor* to assure you that this is numerically the very day on which it is fit to give such notification, and that a day sooner or a day later would be improper?—But not to trifle politically with you, your redemption is nearer than you think for, though not complete: the terms a little depend upon yourself. You must send me an account, strictly and upon your honour, what your debts are: as there is no possibility for the present but of compounding them, I put my friendship upon it, that you answer me sincerely. Should you, upon the hopes of facilitating your return, not deal ingenuously with me, which I will not suspect, it would occasion what I hope will never happen. Some overtures are going to be made to miss —, to ward off impediments from her. In short, though I cannot explain any of the means, your fortune wears another face; and if you send me immediately, upon your honour, a faithful account of what I ask, no time will be lost to labour your return, which I wish so much, and of which I have said so little lately, as I have had better hopes of it. Don't joke with me upon this head, as you sometimes do: be explicit, be open in the most unbounded manner, and deal like a man of sense with a heart that deserves you should have no disguises to it. You know me and my style: when I engage earnestly as I do in this business, I can't bear not to be treated in my own way.

Sir Charles Williams is made ambassador to Russia; which concludes all I know. But at such a period, two days may produce much, and I shall not send away my letter till I am in town on Tuesday. Good-night!

Thursday 17th.

ALL the officers on the Irish establishment are ordered over thither immediately:

diately : lord Hartington has offered to go directly¹, and sets out with Mr. Conway this day fe'nnight. The journey to Hanover is positive : what if there should be a crossing-over and figuring-in of kings ? I know who don't think all this very serious ; so that, if you have a mind to be in great spirits, you may quote lord H——. He went to visit the duchess of Bedford t'other morning, just after lord Anson had been there and told her his opinion. She asked lord H. what news ? He knew none. " Don't you hear there will be certainly war ?" " No, madam : I saw Mr. Nugent yesterday, and he did not tell me any thing of it." She replied, " I have just seen a man who must know, and who thinks it unavoidable." " Nay, madam, perhaps it may : *I don't think a little war would do us any harm.*" Just as if he had said, losing a little blood in spring is very wholesome ; or that a little hissing would not do the Mingotti any harm !

I went t'other morning to see the sale of Mr. Pelham's plate, with G. Selwyn—" Lord ! says he, how many toads have been eaten off those plates !" Adieu ! I flatter myself that this will be a comfortable letter to you : but I must repeat, that I expect a very serious answer, and very sober resolutions. If I treat you like a child, consider you have been so. I know I am in the right—more delicacy would appear kinder, without being so kind. As I wish and intend to restore and establish your happiness, I shall go thoroughly to work. You don't want an apothecary, but a surgeon—but I shall give you over at once, if you are either froward or relapse.

Yours till then,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXI.

Arlington-street, April 24, 1755.

I DON'T doubt but you will conclude that this letter, written so soon after my last, comes to notify a great sea-victory, or defeat ; or that the French are landed in Ireland, and have taken and fortified Cork ; that they have been joined by all the wild Irish, who have proclaimed the pretender, and are charmed with the prospect of being governed by a true descendant of the Mac-na-O's ; or that the king of Prussia, like an unnatural ne-

¹ As viceroy.

phew,

phew, has seized his uncle and Schutz in a post-chaise, and obliged them to hear the rehearsal of a French opera of his own composing—No such thing! If you will be guessing, you will guess wrong—all I mean to tell you is, that thirteen gold-fish, caparisoned in coats of mail, as rich as if mademoiselle Scuderi had invented their armour, embarked last Friday on a secret expedition; which, as Mr. Weekes^a and the wisest politicians of Twickenham concluded, was designed against the island of Jersey—but to their consummate mortification, captain Chevalier is detained by a law-suit, and the poor Chinese adventurers are now frying under deck below bridge.—In short, if your governor is to have any gold-fish, you must come and manage their transport yourself. Did you receive my last letter? If you did, you will not think it impossible that you should preside at such an embarkation.

The war is quite gone out of fashion, and seems adjourned to America: though I am disappointed, I am not surprised. You know my despair about this eventless age! How pleasant to have lived in times when one could have been sure every week of being able to write such a paragraph as this!—We hear that the *Christians* who were on their voyage for the recovery of the Holy Land, have been massacred in Cyprus by the natives, who were provoked at a rape and murder committed in a church by some young noblemen belonging to the nuntio—or—Private letters from Rome attribute the death of his holiness to poison, which they pretend was given to him in the sacrament, by the cardinal of St. Cecilia, whose mistress he had debauched. The same letters add, that this cardinal stands the fairest for succeeding to the papal tiara; though a natural son of the late pope is supported by the whole interest of Arragon and Naples.—Well! since neither the pope nor the most christian king will play the devil, I must condescend to tell you flippancies of less dignity. There is a young Frenchman here, called monsieur Herault. Lady ——— carried him and his governor to sup with her and miss ——— at a tavern t'other night. I have long said that the French were relapsed into barbarity, and quite ignorant of the world—You shall judge: in the first place, the young man was bashful: in the next, the governor, so ignorant as not to have heard of women of fashion carrying men to a tavern, thought it incumbent upon him *to do the honours* for his pupil, who was as modest and as much in a state of nature as the ladies themselves, and hazarded some familiarities with lady ———. The confe-

^a A carpenter at Twickenham, employed by Mr. Walpole.

quence was, that the next morning she sent a card to both, to desire they would not come to her ball that evening, to which she had invited them, and to beg the favour of them never to come into her house again. Adieu! I am prodigal of my letters, as I hope not to write you many more.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXII.

Arlington-street, May 6, 1755.

MY DEAR SIR,

DO you get my letters? or do I write only for the entertainment of the clerks of the post-office? I have not heard from you this month! It will be very unlucky, if my last to you has miscarried, as it required an answer, of importance to you, and very necessary to my satisfaction.

I told you of lord P——'s intended motion. He then repented, and wrote to my lady Yarmouth and Mr. Fox to mediate his pardon. Not contented with his reception, he determined to renew his intention. Sir Cordel Firebrace took it up, and intended to move the same address in the commons, but was prevented by a sudden adjournment. However, the last day but one of the session, lord P—— read his motion, which was a speech. My lord Chesterfield (who of all men living seemed to have no business to defend the duke of N. after much the same sort of ill usage) said the motion was improper, and moved to adjourn. T'other earl said, "Then, pray, my lords, what is to become of my motion?" The house burst out a-laughing: he divided it, but was single. He then advertised his papers as lost. Legge, in his punning style, said, "My lord P—— has had a stroke of an apoplexy; he has lost both his speech and motion." It is now printed; but not having succeeded in prose, he is turned poet—you may guess how good!

The Duke^{*} is at the head of the regency—you may guess if we are afraid! Both fleets are sailed. The night the king went, there was a magnificent ball and supper at Bedford-house. The duke was there: he was playing at

* William duke of Cumberland.

hazard with a great heap of gold before him : somebody said, he looked like the prodigal son and the fatted calf both. In the dessert was a model of Walton-bridge in glass. Yesterday I gave a great breakfast at Strawberry-hill to the Bedford-court. There were the duke and duchess, lord Tavistock and lady Caroline, my lord and lady Gower, lady Caroline Egerton, lady Betty Waldegrave, lady Mary Coke, Mrs. Pitt, Mr. Churchill and lady Mary, Mr. Bap. Leveson, and colonel Sebright. The first thing I asked Harry was, "Does the sun shine?" It did; and Strawberry was all gold, and all green. I am not apt to think people really like it, that is, understand it; but I think the flattery of yesterday was sincere; I judge by the notice the duchess took of your drawings. Oh! how you will think the shades of Strawberry extended! Do you observe the tone of satisfaction with which I say this, as thinking it near? Mrs. Pitt brought her French horns: we placed them in the corner of the wood, and it was delightful. Poyang has great custom: I have lately given count Perron some gold-fish, which he has carried in his post-chaise to Turin: he has already carried some before. The Russian minister has asked me for some too, but I doubt their succeeding there; unless, according to the universality of my system, every thing is to be found out at last, and practised every where.

I have got a new book that will divert you, called *Anecdotes Littéraires*: it is a collection of stories and bons-mots of all the French writers; but so many of their bons-mots are impertinencies, follies, and vanities, that I have blotted out the title, and written *Misères des Sçavants*. It is a triumph for the ignorant. Gray says, very justly, that learning never should be encouraged, it only draws out fools from their obscurity; and you know, I have always thought a running-footman as meritorious a being as a learned man. Why is there more merit in having travelled one's eyes over so many reams of papers, than in having carried one's legs over so many acres of ground? Adieu, my dear sir! Pray don't be taken prisoner to France, just when you are expected at Strawberry!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

Strawberry-hill, June 10, 1755.

MR. MÜNTZ^{*} is arrived. I am sorry I can by no means give any commendation to the hasty step you took about him. Ten guineas were a great deal too much to advance to him, and must raise expectations in him that will not at all answer. You have entered into no written engagement with him, nor even sent me his receipt for the money. My good sir, is this the sample you give me of the prudence and providence you have learned? I don't love to enter into the particulars of my own affairs; I will only tell you in one word, that they require great management. My endeavours are all employed to serve you; don't, I beg, give me reasons to apprehend that they will be thrown away. It is much in obscurity whether I shall be able to accomplish your re-establishment; but I shall go on with great discouragement, if I cannot promise myself that you will be a very different person after your return. I shall never have it in my power to do twice what I am now doing for you; and I choose to say the worst before hand, rather than to reprove you for indolence and thoughtlessness hereafter, when it may be too late. Excuse my being so serious, but I find it is necessary.

You are not displeased with me, I know, even when I pout: you see I am not quite in good-humour with you, and I don't disguise it; but I have done scolding you for this time. Indeed I might as well continue it; for I have nothing else to talk of but Strawberry, and of that subject you must be well wearied. I believe she alluded to my disposition to *pout*, rather than meant to compliment me, when my lady Townshend said to somebody, t'other day, who told her how well Mrs. Leneve was, and in spirits, "Oh! she must be in spirits: why, she lives with Mr. Walpole, who is spirit of hartshorn!"

Princess Emily has been here:—Liked it? Oh no!—I don't wonder;—I never liked St. James's.—She was so inquisitive and so curious in prying into the very offices and servants' rooms, that her captain Bateman was sensible of it, and begged Catherine not to mention it. He addressed himself

^{*} Upon Mr. Bentley's recommendation, Mr. Walpole had invited Mr. Müntz from Jersey, and he lived for some time at Strawberry-hill. E.

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well, if he hoped to meet with taciturnity! Catherine immediately ran down to the pond, and whispered to all the reeds, "Lord! that a princess should be such a gossip!"—In short, Strawberry-hill is the puppet-show of the times.

I have lately bought two more portraits of personages in Grammont, Harry Jermyn, and Chiffinch: my Arlington-street is so full of portraits, that I shall scarce find room for Mr. Müntz's works.

Wednesday, 11th.

I WAS prevented from finishing my letter yesterday, by what do you think? By no less magnificent a circumstance than a deluge. We have had an extraordinary drought, no grass, no leaves, no flowers; not a white rose for the festival of yesterday! About four arrived such a flood, that we could not see out of the windows: the whole lawn was a lake, though situated on so high an Ararat: presently it broke through the leads, drowned the pretty blue bed-chamber, passed through ceilings and floors into the little parlour, terrified Harry, and opened all Catherine's water-gates and *speech-gates*.—I had but just time to collect two dogs, a couple of sheep, a pair of bantams, and a brace of gold-fish; for, in the haste of my zeal to imitate my ancestor Noah, I forgot that fish would not easily be drowned. In short, if you chance to spy a little ark with pinnacles sailing towards Jersey, open the sky-light, and you will find some of your acquaintance. You never saw such desolation! A pigeon brings word that Mabland has fared still worse: it never came into my head before, that a rainbow-office for insuring against water might be very necessary. This is a true account of the late deluge.

Witness our hands,

HORACE NOAH,
CATHERINE NOAH, her ~~X~~ mark,
HENRY SHERM,
LOUIS JAPHET,
PETER HAM, &c.

I was going to seal my letter, and thought I should scarce have any thing

* The pretender's birth-day.

more important to tell you than the history of the flood, when a most extraordinary piece of news indeed arrived—nothing less than a new gun-powder-plot—last Monday was to be the fatal day—There was a ball at Kew—Vanneschi and his son, directors of the opera, two English lords and two Scotch lords are in confinement at justice Fielding's.—This is exactly all I know of the matter; and this weighty intelligence is brought by the waterman from my housemaid in Arlington-street, who sent Harry word that the town is in an uproar; and to confirm it, the waterman says he heard the same thing at Hungerford-stairs. I took the liberty to represent to Harry, that the ball at Kew was this day se'nnight for the prince's birth-day; that, as the Duke was at it, I imagined the Scotch lords would rather have chosen that day for the execution of their tragedy; that I believed Vanneschi's son was a child, and that peers are generally confined at the Tower, not at justice Fielding's; besides, that we are much nearer to Kew than Hungerford-stairs are.—But Harry, who has not at all recovered the deluge, is extremely disposed to think Vanneschi very like Guy Fawkes; and is so persuaded that so dreadful a story could *not* be invented, that I have been forced to believe it too: and in the course of our reasoning and guessing, I told him, that though I could not fix upon all four, I was persuaded that the late lord Lovat who was beheaded must be one of the Scotch peers, and lord A.'s son who is not begot, one of the English.—I was afraid he would think I treated so serious a business too ludicrously, if I had hinted at the scene of distressed friendship that would be occasioned by lord H——'s examining his intimate Vanneschi. Adieu! my dear sir—Mr. Fox and lady Caroline, and lord and lady Kildare are to dine here to-day; and if they tell Harry or me any more of the plot, you shall know it.

Wednesday night.

WELL! now for the plot: thus much is true. A laundry-maid of the duchess of Marlborough, passing by the Cocoa-tree, saw two gentlemen go in there, one of whom dropped a letter; it was directed, *to you*. She opened it. It was very obscure, talked of designs at Kew miscarried, of new methods to be taken; and as this way of correspondence had been repeated too often, another must be followed; and it told *you* that the next letter to him should be in a bandbox at such a house in the Haymarket. The duchess concluded it related to a gang of street-robbers, and sent it to Fielding. He sent to the house named, and did find a box and a letter, which, though obscure, had

treason

treason enough in it. It talked of a design at Kew miscarried; that the opera was now the only place, and consequently the scheme must be deferred till next season, especially as *a certain person* is abroad. For the other great person (the Duke), they are sure of him at any time. There was some indirect mention too of gunpowder. Vanneschi and others have been apprehended: but a conclusion was made, that it was a malicious design against the lord high treasurer of the opera and his administration; and so they have been dismissed. Macnamara,* I suppose you Jerseyans know, is returned with his fleet to Brest, leaving the transports sailing to America. Lord Thanet and Mr. Stanley are just gone to Paris, I believe to enquire after the war.

The weather has been very bad for showing Strawberry to the Kildares; we have not been able to stir out of doors: but to make me amends, I have discovered that lady Kildare is a true Sevignist. You know what pleasure I have in any increase of our sect; I thought she grew handsomer than ever as she talked with devotion of Notre Dame des Rochers. Adieu, my dear sir!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. Tell me if you receive this; for in these gunpowder-times to be sure the clerks of the post-office are peculiarly alert.

L E T T E R XXIV.

Strawberry-hill, July 5, 1755.

YOU vex me exceedingly. I beg, if it is not too late, that you would not send me these two new quarries of granite; I had rather pay the original price and leave them where they are, than be encumbered with them. My house is already a stone-cutter's shop, nor do I know what to do with what I have got. But this is not what vexes me, but your desiring me to traffick with Carter, and showing me that you are still open to any visionary project! Do you think I can turn broker, and factor, and I don't know what? And at your time of life do you expect to make a fortune by becoming

* The French admiral.

ing a granite merchant? There must be great demand for a commodity that costs a guinea a foot, and a month an inch to polish! You send me no drawings, for which you know I should thank you infinitely, and are hunting for every thing that I would thank you for letting alone. In short, my dear sir, I am determined never to be a projector, nor to deal with projects. If you will still pursue them, I must beg you will not only not employ me in them, but not even let me know that you employ any body else. If you will not be content with my plain rational way of serving you, I can do no better; nor can I joke upon it. I can combat any difficulties for your service, but those of your own raising. Not to talk any more crossly, and to prevent, if I can for the future, any more of these expostulations, I must tell you plainly, that with regard to my own circumstances, I generally drive to a penny, and have no money to spare for visions. I do and am doing all I can for you; and let me desire you once for all, not to send me any more persons or things without asking my consent, and staying till you receive it. I cannot help adding to the chapter of complaint * * * * .

These, my dear sir, are the imprudent difficulties you draw me into, and which almost discourage me from proceeding in your business. If you anticipate your revenue, even while in Jersey, and build castles in the air before you have repassed the sea, can I expect that you will be a better œconomist either of your fortune or your prudence here? I beg you will preserve this letter, ungracious as it is, because I hope it will serve to prevent my writing any more such—

Now to Mr. Müntz:—Hitherto he answers all you promised and vowed for him: he is very modest, humble, and reasonable; and has seen so much and knows so much of countries and languages, that I am not likely to be soon tired of him. His drawings are very pretty: he has done two views of Strawberry that please me extremely: his landscape and trees are much better than I expected. His next work is to be a large picture from your Mabland for Mr. Chute, who is much content with him: he goes to the Vine in a fortnight or three weeks. We came from thence the day before yesterday. I have drawn up an *inventionary* of all I propose he should do there; the computation goes a little beyond five thousand pounds; but he does not go half so fast as my impatience demands: he is so reasonable, and will think of dying, and of the gout, and of twenty disagreeable things that one must do and have, that he takes no joy in planting.

and future views, but distresses all my rapidity of schemes. Last week we were at my sister's at Chaffont in Buckinghamshire, to see what we could make of it; but it wants so much of every thing, and would require so much more than an inventory of five thousand pounds, that we decided nothing, except that Mr. Chute has designed the prettiest house in the world for them. We went to see the objects of the neighbourhood, Bulstrode and Latimers. The former is a melancholy monument of Dutch magnificence: however, there is a brave gallery of old pictures, and a chapel with two fine windows of modern painted-glass. The ceiling was formerly decorated with the assumption, or rather *presumption*, of chancellor Jeffries, to whom it belonged; but a very judicious fire hurried him somewhere else. Latimers belongs to Mrs. Cavendish. I have lived there formerly with Mr. Conway, but it is much improved since; yet the river stops short at an hundred yards just under your eye, and the house has undergone Batty Langley-discipline: half the ornaments are of his bastard Gothic, and half of Hallet's mungrel Chinese. I want to write over the doors of most modern edifices, *Repaired and beautified, Langley and Hallet churchwardens*. The great dining-room is hung with the paper of my staircase, but not shaded properly like mine. I was much more charmed lately at a visit I made to the Cardigans at Blackheath. Would you believe that I had never been in Greenwich-park? I never had, and am transported! Even the glories of Richmond and Twickenham hide their diminished rays.—Yet nothing is equal to the fashion of this village: Mr. Müntz says we have more coaches than there are in half France. Mrs. Pritchard has bought Ragman's castle, for which my lord Litchfield could not agree. We shall be as celebrated as Baïæ or Tivoli; and, if we have not such sonorous names as they boast, we have very famous people: Clive and Pritchard, actresses; Scott and Hudson, painters; my lady Suffolk, famous in her time; Mr. H——, the impudent lawyer, that Tom Hervey wrote against; Whitehead, the poet—and Cambridge, the every thing. Adieu! my dear sir—I know not one syllable of news.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

Strawberry-hill, July 17, 1755.

TO be sure, war is a dreadful calamity, &c. ! But then it is a very comfortable commodity for writing letters and writing history ; and as one did not contribute to make it, why, there is no harm in being a little amused with looking on : and if one can but keep the pretender on t'other side Derby, and keep Arlington-street and Strawberry-hill from being carried to Paris, I know nobody that would do more to promote peace, or that will bear the want of it with a better grace than myself. If I don't send you an actual declaration of war in this letter, at least you perceive I am the harbinger of it. An account arrived yesterday morning, that Boscawen had missed the French fleet, who are got into Cape Breton ; but two of his captains attacked three of their squadron and have taken two, with scarce any loss. This is the third time one of the French captains has been taken by Boscawen.

Mr. Conway is arrived from Ireland, where the triumphant party are what parties in that situation generally are, unreasonable and presumptuous. They will come into no terms without a stipulation that the primate^{*} shall not be in the regency. This is a bitter pill to digest—but must not it be swallowed ? Have we heads to manage a French war and an Irish civil war too ?

There are little domestic news. If you insist upon some, why, I believe I could persuade somebody or other to hang themselves ; but that is scarce an article uncommon enough to send cross the sea. For example, the rich —, whose brother died of the small-pox a year ago, and left him 400,000^l. had a fit of the gout last week, and shot himself. I only begin to be afraid that it should grow as necessary to shoot one's self here, as it is to go into the army in France. Sir Robert Browne has lost his last daughter, to whom he could have given eight thousand pounds a-year. When I tell these riches and madnesses to Mr. Müntz, he stares so, that I sometimes fear he thinks I mean to impose on him. It is cruel to a person who collects the follies of the age for the information of posterity, to have one's veracity doubted : it is the truth of them that makes them

^{*} Dr. Stone.

worth notice. Charles Townshend marries the great dowager Dalkeith :—his parts and presumption are prodigious. He wanted nothing but independence to let him loose : I propose great entertainment from him ; and now, perhaps, the times will admit it ! There may be such things again as parties—odd evolutions happen. The ballad I am going to transcribe for you is a very good comment on so common-place a text. My lord Bath, who was brought hither by my lady Hervey's and Billy Bristow's reports of the charms of the place, has made the following stanzas, to the old tune which you remember of Rowe's ballad on Doddington's Mrs. Strawbridge :

I.

Some talk of Gunnersbury,

For Sion some declare ;

And some say, that with Chiswick-house

No villa can compare :

But all the beaux of Middlesex,

Who know the country well,

Say, that Strawberry-hill, that Strawberry

Doth bear away the bell.

II.

Though Surry boasts its Oatlands,

And Claremont kept so jim ;

And though they talk of Southcote's,

'Tis but a dainty whim ;

For ask the gallant Bristow,

Who does in taste excell,

If Strawberry-hill, if Strawberry

Don't bear away the bell.

Can there be an odder revolution of things, than that the printer of the *Craftsman* should live in a house of mine, and that the author of the *Craftsman* should write a panegyric on a house of mine ?

¹ One Franklyn, who occupied the cottage in the enclosure which Mr. Walpole afterwards called the Flower-garden at Strawberry-hill.— When he bought the ground on which this tenement stood, he allowed Franklyn to continue to occupy it during his life. E.

I dined

I dined yesterday at Wanstead: many years have passed since I saw it. The disposition of the house and the prospect are better than I expected, and very fine: the garden, which they tell you cost as much as the house, that is, 100,000*l*. (don't tell Mr. Müntz) is wretched; the furniture fine, but totally without taste: such continences and incontinences of Scipio and Alexander, by I don't know whom! such flame-coloured gods and goddesses, by Kent! such family-pieces, by—I believe the late earl himself, for they are as ugly as the children that he really begot! The whole great apartment is of oak, finely carved, unpainted, and has a charming effect. The present earl is the most generous creature in the world: in the first chamber I entered he offered me four marble tables that lay in cases about the room: I compounded, after forty refusals of every thing I commended, to bring away only a haunch of venison: I believe he has not had so cheap a visit a good while. I commend myself, as I ought; for, to be sure, there were twenty ebony chairs, and a couch, and a table, and a glass, that would have tried the virtue of a philosopher of double my size! After dinner we dragged a gold-fish-pond for my lady F. and lord S. I could not help telling my lord Tilney, that they would certainly burn the poor fish for the gold, like old lace. There arrived a marquis St. Simon, from Paris, who understands English, and who has seen your book of designs for Gray's Odes: he was much pleased at meeting me, to whom the individual cat belonged—and you may judge whether I was pleased with him. Adieu! my dear sir.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXVI.

Strawberry-hill, August 4, 1755, between 11 and 12 at night.

I CAME from London to-day, and am just come from supping at Mrs. Clive's, to write to you by the fire-side. We have been exceedingly troubled for some time with St. Swithin's diabetes, and have not a dry thread in any walk about us. I am not apt to complain of this malady, nor do I: it keeps us green at present, and will make our shades very thick, against we are fourscore, and fit to enjoy them. I brought with me your two letters of

U u 2

July

July 30 and August 1; a fight I have not seen a long time!—But, my dear sir, you have been hurt at my late letters. Do let me say thus much in excuse for myself. You know how much I value, and what real and great satisfaction I have in your drawings. Instead of pleasing me with so little trouble to yourself, do you think it was no mortification to receive every thing but your drawings? to find you full of projects, and, I will not say, with some imprudences!—But I have done on this subject—my friendship will always be the same for you; it will only act with more or less cheerfulness, as you use your common sense or your disposition to chimerical schemes and carelessness. To give you all the present satisfaction in my power, I will tell you * * * * *

I think your good-nature means to reproach me with having dropped any hint of finding amusement in contemplating a war. When one would not do any thing to promote it, when one would do any thing to put a period to it, when one is too insignificant to contribute to either, I must own I see no blame in thinking an active age more agreeable to live in, than a soporific one.—But, my dear sir, I must adopt *your* patriotism—Is not it laudable to be revived with the revival of British glory? Can I be an indifferent spectator of the triumphs of my country? Can I help feeling a tattoo at my heart, when the duke of Newcastle makes as great a figure in history as Burleigh or Godolphin—nay, as queen Bess herself?—She gained no battles in person; she was only the actuating genius. You seem to have heard of a proclamation of war, of which we have not heard; and not to have come to the knowledge of taking of Beau Sejour by colonel Monckton. In short, the French and we seem to have crossed over and figured in, in politics. Mirepoix complained grievously that the duke of N. had over-reached him—But he is to be forgiven in so good a cause! It is the first person he ever deceived!—I am preparing a new folio for heads of the heroes that are to bloom in mezzotinto from this war. At present my chief study is West-Indian history. You would not think me very ill-natured if you knew all I feel at the cruelty and villainy of European settlers—But this very morning I found that part of the purchase of Maryland from the savage proprietors (for we do not massacre, we are such good christians as only to cheat) was a quantity of vermilion and a parcel of Jews-harps!

Indeed, if I pleased, I might have another study; it is my fault if I am not a commentator and a corrector of the press. The marquis de St. Simon, whom

whom I mentioned to you, at a very first visit proposed to me to look over a translation he had made of *The Tale of a Tub*—the proposal was soon followed by a folio, and a letter of three sides to press me seriously to revise it. You shall judge of my scholar's competence. He translates *L'Estrange*, *Dryden* and others, *l'etrange*, *Dryden*, &c. Then in the description of the taylor as an idol, and his goose as the symbol; he says in a note, that the *goose* means the dove, and is a concealed satire on the holy ghost.—It put me in mind of the Dane, who talking of orders to a Frenchman, said—"Notre St. esprit est un elephant."

Don't think, because I prefer your drawings to every thing in the world, that I am such a churl as to refuse Mrs. B.'s partridges: I shall thank her very much for them. You must excuse me, if I am vain enough to be so convinced of my own taste, that all the neglect that has been thrown upon your designs cannot make me think I have over-valued them. I must think that the states of Jersey who execute your town-house, have much more judgment than all our connoisseurs. When I every day see Greek, and Roman, and Italian, and Chinese, and Gothic architecture embroidered and inlaid upon one another, or called by each other's names, I can't help thinking that the grace and simplicity and truth of your taste, in whichever you undertake, is real taste. I go farther: I wish you would know in what you excel, and not be hunting after twenty things unworthy your genius. If flattery is my turn, believe this to be so.

Mr. Müntz is at the Vine, and has been some time. I want to know more of this history of the German: I do assure you, that I like both his painting and behaviour—but if any history of any kind is to accompany him, I shall be most willing to part with him. However I may divert myself as a spectator of broils, believe me I am thoroughly sick of having any thing to do in any. Those in a neighbouring island are likely to subside—and, contrary to custom, the *priest*¹ himself is to be the *sacrifice*.

I have contracted a sort of intimacy with Garrick, who is my neighbour. He affects to study my taste: I lay it all upon you—he admires you. He is building a grateful temple to Shakespeare: I offered him this motto:

¹ The primate of Ireland.

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Quod spero et placeo, si placeo tuum est. Don't be surpris'd if you should hear of me as a gentleman coming upon the stage next winter for my diversion.—The truth is, I make the most of this acquaintance to protect my poor neighbour at *Clivden*—you understand the conundrum, *Clive's den*.

Adieu, my dear sir! Need I repeat assurances? If I need, believe that nothing that can tend to your recovery has been or shall be neglected by me. You may trust me to the utmost of my power—beyond that, what can I do? Once more, adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXVII.

Strawberry-hill, August 15, 1755.

MY DEAR SIR,

THOUGH I wrote to you so lately, and have certainly nothing new to tell you, I can't help scribbling a line to you to-night, as I am going to Mr. Rigby's for a week or ten days, and must thank you first for the three pictures. One of them charms me, the Mount Orgueil, which is absolutely fine; the sea, and shadow upon it, are masterly. The other two I don't, at least won't, take for finished. If you please, Elizabeth Castle shall be Mr. Müntz's performance: indeed I see nothing of you in it. I do reconnoitre you in the Hercules and Nessus; but in both, your colours are dirty, carelessly dirty: in your distant hills you are improved, and not hard. The figures are too large—I don't mean in the Elizabeth Castle, for there they are neat; but the centaur, though he dies as well as Garrick can, is outrageous. Hercules and Deianira are by no means so: he is sentimental, and she most improperly sorrowful. However, I am pleas'd enough to beg you would continue. As soon as Mr. Müntz returns from the Vine you shall have a supply of colours. In the mean time, why give up the good old trade of drawing? Have you no Indian ink, no foot-water, no snuff, no coat of onion, no juice of any thing? If you love me, draw: you would, if you knew the real pleasure you can give me. I have been studying all your
drawings;

drawings ; and next to architecture and trees, I determine that you succeed in nothing better than animals. Now (as the newspapers say) the late ingenious Mr. Seymour is dead, I would recommend horses and greyhounds to you. I should think you capable of a landscape or two with delicious bits of architecture. I have known you execute the light of a torch or lanthorn so well, that if it was called Schalken, a house-keeper at Hampton-court or Windsor, or a Catherine at Strawberry-hill, would show it, and say it cost ten thousand pounds. Nay, if I could believe that you would ever execute any more designs I proposed to you, I would give you a hint for a picture that struck me t'other day in Perefixe's Life of Henry IV. He says, the king was often seen lying upon a common straw bed among the soldiers, with a piece of brown bread in one hand, and a bit of charcoal in t'other, to draw an encampment, or town that he was besieging. If this is not character and a picture, I don't know what is.

I dined to-day at Garrick's: there were the duke of Grafton, lord and lady Rochford, lady Holderness, the crooked Mostyn, and Dabreu the Spanish minister ; two regents, of which one is lord chamberlain, the other groom of the stole ; and the wife of a secretary of state. This is being sur un assez bon ton for a player ! Don't you want to ask me how I like him ? Do want, and I will tell you—I like her exceedingly ; her behaviour is all sense, and all sweetness too. I don't know how, he does not improve so fast upon me : there is a great deal of parts and vivacity and variety, but there is a great deal too of mimicry and burlesque. I am very ungrateful, for he flatters me abundantly ; but unluckily I know it. I was accustomed to it enough when my father was first minister : on his fall I lost it all at once : and since that, I have lived with Mr. Chute, who is all vehemence ; with Mr. Fox, who is all disputation ; with sir Charles Williams, who has no time from flattering himself ; with Gray, who does not hate to find fault with me ; with Mr. Conway, who is all sincerity ; and with you and Mr. Rigby, who have always laughed at me in a good-natured way. I don't know how, but I think I like all this as well—I beg his pardon, Mr. Raftor does flatter me ; but I should be a cormorant for praise, if I could swallow it whole as he gives it me.

Sir William Yonge, who has been extinct so long, is at last dead ; and the war, which began with such a flirt of vivacity, is I think gone to sleep.
General.

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General Braddock has not yet sent over to claim the surname of Americanus. But why should I take pains to show you in how many ways I know nothing?—Why; I can tell it you in one word—why, Mr. ——— knows nothing!—I wish you good-night!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXVIII.

Arlington-street, August 28, 1755.

OUR piratic laurels, with which the French have so much reproached us, have been exceedingly pruned! Braddock is defeated and killed, by a handful of Indians and by the baseness of his own troops, who sacrificed him and his gallant officers. Indeed, there is some suspicion that cowardice was not the motive, but resentment at having been draughted from Irish regiments.—Were such a desertion universal, could one but commend it? Could one blame men who should refuse to be knocked on the head for sixpence a day, and for the advantage and dignity of a few ambitious? But in this case, one pities the brave young officers, who cannot so easily disfranchise themselves from the prejudices of glory!—Our disappointment is greater than our loss: six-and-twenty officers are killed, who, I suppose, have not left a vast many fatherless and *widowless*, as an old woman told me to-day with great tribulation.—The ministry have a much more serious affair on their hands—Lord L. and lord A. have had a dreadful quarrel! *Coquus teterrima belli causa!* When lord ——— shot himself, lord L. said, “Well, I am very sorry for poor ———! but it is the part of a wise man to make the best of every misfortune—I shall now have the best cook in England.” This was uttered before lord A. Joras¹, who is a man of extreme punctilio, as cooks and officers ought to be, would not be hired till he knew whether this lord ——— would retain him. When it was decided that he would not, lord L. proposed to hire Joras. Lord A. had already engaged him. Such a breach of friendship was soon followed by an expostulation (there was jealousy of the D. of Newcastle’s favour already under the coals): in short, the nephew earl called the

¹ The name of the cook in question.

favourite

favourite earl such gross names, that it was well they were ministers ! otherwise, as Mincing says, "*I vow, I believe they must have fit.*" The public, that is, half-a-dozen toad-eaters, have great hopes that the present unfavourable posture of affairs in America will tend to cement this breach, and that *we* shall all unite hand and heart against the common enemy.

I returned the night before last from my peregrination. It is very unlucky for me that no crown of martyrdom is entailed on zeal for antiquities ; I should be a rubric martyr of the first class. After visiting the new salt-water baths at Harwich, (which, next to horse-racing, grows the most fashionable resource for people *who want to get out of town, and who love the country and retirement !*) I went to see Orford castle, and lord Hertford's at Sudborn. The one is a ruin, and the other ought to be so. Returning in a one-horse-chair over a wild vast heath, I went out of the road to see the remains of Buttley-abbey ; which however I could not see : for, as the keys of Orford castle were at Sudborn, so the keys of Buttley were at Orford ! By this time it was night ; we lost our way, were in excessive rain for above two hours, and only found our way to be overturned into the mire the next morning going into Ipswich. Since that I went to see an old house built by secretary Naunton¹. His descendant, who is a strange retired creature, was unwilling to let us see it ; but we did, and little in it worth seeing. The house never was fine, and is now out of repair ; has a bed with ivory pillars and loose rings, presented to the secretary by some German prince or German artist ; and a small gallery of indifferent portraits, among which there are scarce any worth notice but of the earl of Northumberland, Anna Bullen's lover, and of sir Antony Wingfield ; who having his hand tucked into his girdle, the housekeeper told us, had had his fingers cut off by Harry VIII. But Harry VIII. was not a man pour s'arrêter à ces minuties là ! While we waited for leave to see the house, I strolled into the church-yard, and was struck with a little door open into the chancel, through the arch of which I discovered cross-legged knights and painted tombs ! In short, there are no less than eight considerable monuments, very perfect, of Wingfields, Nauntons, and a sir John Boynet and his wife, as old as Richard the second's

¹ Sir Robert Naunton, master of the court of wards. He wrote *Anecdotes of Queen Elizabeth and her favourites*.—Of his style in this work the following is a specimen : In page 1st he says of Q. Elizabeth, that "on the side of her father was disembogued into her veins, by a confluence of blood, the very abstract of all the greatest houses in Christendom." E.

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time. But what charmed me still more, were two figures of secretary Naunton's father and mother in the window in painted glass, near two feet high, and by far the finest painting on glass I ever saw. His figure, in a puffed doublet, breeches and bonnet, and cloak of scarlet and yellow, is absolutely perfect: her shoulder is damaged. This church, which is scarce bigger than a large chapel, is very ruinous, though containing such treasures! Besides these, there are brasses on the pavement with a succession of all the wonderful head-dresses, which our *plain virtuous* grandmothers invented to tempt our rude and simple ancestors.—I don't know what our nobles might be, but I am sure the milliners three or four hundred years ago must have been more accomplished in the arts, as Prynne calls them, of crisping, curling, frizzling, and frowning, than all the tirewomen of Babylon, modern Paris, or modern Pall-Mall. Dame Winifred Boynet, whom I mentioned above, is accoutred with the coiffure called piked horns, which, if there were any signs in Lothbury and Eastcheap, must have brushed them about strangely, as their ladyships rode behind their gentlemen ushers! Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

 LETTER XXIX.

Strawberry-hill, September 18, 1755.

MY DEAR SIR,

AFTER an expectation of six weeks, I have received a letter from you, dated August 23d. Indeed I did not impute any neglect to you; I knew it arose from the war; but Mr. S—— tells me the packets will now be more regular——Mr. S—— tells me!—What, has he been in town, or at Strawberry?—No; but I have been at Southampton: I was at the Vine; and on the arrival of a few fine days, the first we have had this summer, after a deluge, Mr. Chute persuaded me to take a jaunt to Winchester and Netley-abbey, with the latter of which he is very justly enchanted.

I was disappointed in Winchester: it is a paltry town, and small: king Charles the second's house is the worst thing I ever saw of sir Christopher Wren, a mixture of a town-hall and an hospital; not to mention the bad
choice

choice of the situation in such a country; it is all *ups* that should be *downs*. I talk to you as supposing that you never have been at Winchester; though I suspect you have, for the entrance of the cathedral is the very idea of that of Mabland. I like the smugness of the cathedral, and the profusion of the most beautiful Gothic tombs. That of cardinal Beaufort is in a style more free and of more taste than any thing I have seen of the kind. His figure confirms me in my opinion that I have struck out the true history of the picture that I bought of Robinson; and which I take for the marriage of Henry VI. Besides the monuments of the Saxon kings, of Lucius, William Rufus, his brother, &c. there are those of six such great or considerable men as Beaufort, William of Wickham, him of Wainfleet, the bishops Fox and Gardiner, and my lord treasurer Portland—How much power and ambition under half-a-dozen stones! I own, I grow to look on tombs as lasting mansions, instead of observing them for curious pieces of architecture!—Going into Southampton, I passed Bevis-mount, where my lord Peterborough

Hung his trophies o'er his garden gate;

but general Mordaunt was there, and we could not see it. We walked long by moon-light on the terraces along the beach—Guess, if we talked of and wished for you! The town is crowded; sea-baths are established there too. But how shall I describe Netley to you? I can only, by telling you that it is the spot in the world for which Mr. Chute and I wish. The ruins are vast, and retain fragments of beautiful fretted roofs pendent in the air, with all variety of Gothic patterns of windows wrapped round and round with ivy—many trees are sprouted up amongst the walls, and only want to be increased with cypresses! A hill rises above the abbey, encircled with wood: the fort, in which we would build a tower for habitation, remains with two small platforms. This little castle is buried from the abbey in a wood, in the very centre, on the edge of the hill: on each side breaks in the view of the Southampton-sea, deep blue, glistering with silver and vessels; on one side terminated by Southampton, on the other by Calshot-castle; and the Isle of Wight rising above the opposite hills.—In short, they are not the ruins of Netley, but of Paradise—Oh! the purple abbots, what a spot had they chosen to slumber in! The scene is so beautifully tranquil, yet so lively, that they seem only to have *retired into* the world.

X x 2

I know

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I know nothing of the war, but that we catch little French ships like crawfish. They have taken one of ours with governor — going to —. He is a very worthy young man, but so stiffened with fir —'s old fustian, that I am persuaded he is at this minute in the citadel of Nantes comparing himself to Regulus.

Gray has lately been here. He has begun an ode, which if he finishes equally, will, I think, inspirit all your drawing again. It is founded on an old tradition of Edward I. putting to death the Welsh bards. Nothing but you, or Salvator Rosa, and Nicolo Pouffin, can paint up to the expressive horror and dignity of it. Don't think I mean to flatter you; all I would say is, that now the two latter are dead, you must of necessity be Gray's painter. In order to keep your talent alive, I shall next week send you flake white, brushes, oil, and the inclosed directions from Mr. Müntz, who is still at the Vine, and whom, for want of you, we labour hard to form. I shall put up in the parcel two or three prints of my eagle, which, as you never would draw it, is very moderately performed; and yet the drawing was much better than the engraving. I shall send you too a trifling snuff-box, only as a sample of the new manufacture at Battersea, which is done with copper-plates. Mr. Chute is at the Vine, where I cannot say any works go on in proportion to my impatience. I have left him an *inventory* of all I want to have done there; but I believe it may be bound up with the century of projects of that foolish marquis of Worcester, who printed a catalogue of titles of things, which he gave no directions to execute, nor I believe could. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXX.

Arlington-street, September 30, 1755.

SOLOMON says, somewhere or other, I think it is in Castelvetro's, or Castelnovo's, edition—is not there such a one?—that the infatuation of a nation for a foolish minister is like that of a lover for an ugly woman: when once he opens his eyes, he wonders what the devil bewitched him.
This

This is the text to the present sermon in politics, which I shall not divide under three heads, but tell you at once, that no minister was ever nearer the precipice than ours has been. I did tell you, I believe, that Legge had refused to sign the warrant for the Hessian subsidy: in short, he heartily resented the quick coldness that followed his exaltation, waited for an opportunity of revenge, found this; and to be sure no vengeance ever took speedier strides. All the world revolted against subsidiary treaties; nobody was left to defend them but Murray, and he did not care to venture. Offers of graciousness, of cabinet counsellor, of chancellor of the exchequer, were made to right and left. Dr. Lee was conscientious; Mr. Pitt might be brought in compliment to his M. to digest one—But a system of subsidies!—Impossible! In short, the very first ministership was offered to be made over to my lord Granville—He begged to be excused—he was not fit for it.—Well! you laugh: all this is fact. At last we were forced to strike sail to Mr. Fox: he is named for secretary of state, with not only the lead, but the power of the house of commons. You ask, in the room of which secretary? What signifies of which? Why, I think of sir Thomas Robinson, who returns to his wardrobe, and lord Barrington comes into the war-office. This is the present state of things in this grave reasonable island: the union hug like two cats over a string; the rest are arming for opposition—But I will not promise you any more warlike winters; I remember how soon the campaign of the last was addled.

In Ireland, Mr. Conway has pacified all things: the Irish are to get as drunk as ever to the glorious and immortal memory of king George, and the prerogative is to be exalted as high as ever, by being obliged to give up the primate.—There! I think I have told you volumes: yet I know you will not be content; you will want to know something of the war and of America: but I assure you it is not the bon-ton to talk of either this week. We think not of the former, and of the latter we should think to very little purpose, for we have not heard a syllable more; Braddock's defeat still remains in the situation of the longest battle that ever was fought with nobody. Content your English spirit with knowing that there are very near three thousand French prisoners in England, taken out of several ships.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R XXXI.

Arlington-street, October 19, 1755.

DO you love royal quarrels? You may be served—I know you don't love an invasion—nay, that even passes my taste; *it will make too much party*. In short, the lady dowager Prudence begins to step a little over the threshold of that discretion which she has always hitherto so sanctimoniously observed. She is suspected of strange whims; so strange, as neither to like more German subsidies or more German matches. A strong faction, professedly against the treaties¹, openly against Mr. Fox, and covertly under the banners of the aforesaid *lady Prudence*, arm from all quarters against the opening of the session. Her ladyship's eldest boy declares violently against being *bewolfenbuttl'd*—a word which I don't pretend to understand, as it is not in Mr. Johnson's new dictionary. There! now I have been as enigmatic as ever I have accused you of being; and hoping you will not be able to expound my German hieroglyphics, I proceed to tell you in plain English that we are going to be invaded. I have within this day or two seen grandees of ten, twenty, and thirty thousand pounds a year, who are in a mortal fright: consequently, it would be impertinent in much less folk to tremble—and accordingly they don't. At court there is no doubt but an attempt will be made before Christmas.—I find valour is like virtue: impregnable as they boast themselves, it is discovered that on the first attack both lie strangely open! They are raising more men, camps are to be formed in Kent and Sussex, the duke of Newcastle is frightened out of his wits, which though he has lost so often you know he always recovers, and as fresh as ever. Lord E. despairs of the commonwealth; and I am going to fortify my castle of Strawberry, according to an old charter I should have had, for embattling and making a deep ditch—But here am I laughing, when I really ought to cry both with my public eye and my private one. I have told you what I think ought to sluice my public eye: and your private eye too will moisten, when I tell you that poor miss Harriet Montagu² is

¹ Treaties of subsidy with the landgrave of Hesse and the empress of Russia for the defence of Hanover. E.

² Sister to Mr. George Montagu.

dead.

dead. She died about a fortnight ago ; but having nothing else to tell you, I would not send a letter so far with only such melancholy news—and so, you will say, I staid till I could tell still more bad news. The truth is, I have for some time had two letters of yours to answer: it is three weeks since I wrote to you, and one begins to doubt whether one shall ever be to write again. I will hope all my best hopes, for I have no sort of intention at this time of day of finishing either as a martyr or a hero.—I rather intend to live and record both those professions, if need be—and I have no inclination to scuttle barefoot after a duke of Wolfenbottle's army, as Philip de Comines says he saw their graces of Exeter and Somerset trudge after the duke of Burgundy's. The invasion, though not much in fashion yet, begins like Moses's rod to swallow other news, both political and *suicidal*. Our politics I have sketched out to you, and can only add, that Mr. Fox's ministry does not as yet promise to be of long duration. When it was first thought that he had got the better of the duke of Newcastle, Charles Townshend said admirably, that he was sure the duchess, like the old cavaliers, would make a vow not to shave her beard till the restoration.

I can't recollect the least morsel of a fess or chevron of the Boynets: they did not happen to enter into any extinct genealogy for whose welfare I interest myself. I sent your letter to Mr. Chute, who is still under his own vine: Mr. Müntz is still with him, recovering of a violent fever.—Adieu! If memoirs don't grow too memorable, I think this season will produce a large crop.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I believe I scarce ever mentioned to you last winter the follies of the opera: the impertinences of a great singer were too old and too common a topic. I must mention them now, when they rise to any improvement in the character of national folly. The Mingotti, a noble figure, a great mistress of music, and a most incomparable actress, surpassed any thing I ever saw for the extravagance of her humours. She never sung above one night in three, from a fever upon her temper; and never would act at all when Ricciarelli, the first man, was to be in dialogue with her. Her fevers grew so high, that the audience caught them, and hissed her more than once: she herself once turned and hissed again—Tit pro tat geminat τον δαπαμειβομένη.

—Well,

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—Well, among the treaties which a secretary of state has negotiated this summer, he has contracted for a *succedaneum* to the Mingotti. In short, there is a woman hired to sing when the other shall be out of humour!

Here is a *World* by lord Chesterfield¹: the first part is very pretty, till it runs into witticism. I have marked the passages I particularly like.

You would not draw Henry IV. at a siege for me: pray don't draw Louis XV.²

L E T T E R XXXII.

Strawberry-hill, October 31, 1755.

AS the invasion is not ready, we are forced to take up with a victory. An account came yesterday, that general Johnson had defeated the French near the lake St. Sacrement, had killed one thousand, and taken the lieutenant-general who commanded them prisoner; his name is Dieskau, a Saxon, an esteemed eleve of marshal Saxe. By the printed account, which I inclose, Johnson showed great generalship and bravery. As the whole business was done by irregulars, it does not lessen the faults of Braddock, and the paric of his troops. If I were so disposed, I could conceive that there are heroes in the world who are not quite pleased with this extra-martinette success³—but we won't blame those Alexanders, till they have beaten the French in Kent! You know it will be time enough to abuse them, when they have done all the service they can! The other inclosed paper is another *World*⁴, by my lord Chesterfield; not so pretty, I think, as the last; yet it has merit. While England and France are at war, and Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt going to war, his lordship is coolly amusing himself at picquet at Bath with a Moravian baron, who would be in prison, if his creditors did not occasionally release him to play with and cheat my lord Chesterfield, as the only chance they have for recovering their money!

We expect the parliament to be thronged, and great animosities. I will

¹ Number 146, of the fifth volume.

² Alluding to the subject Mr. Walpole had proposed to him for a picture, in Letter XXVII. and to the then expected invasion of

England by Louis XV.

³ Alluding to William duke of Cumberland.

⁴ Number 148, of the fifth volume.

not fend you one of the eggs that are laid; for so many political ones have been addled of late years, that I believe all the state game-cocks in the world are impotent.

I did not doubt but you would be struck with the death of poor B. I, t'other night, at White's, found a very remarkable entry in our very—very remarkable wager-book: "Lord — bets fir — twenty guineas that Nash outlives Cibber!" How odd that these two old creatures, selected for their antiquities, should live to see both their wagerers put an end to their own lives! Cibber is within a few days of eighty-four, still hearty, and clear, and well. I told him I was glad to see him look so well: "'Faith," said he, "it is very well that I look at all!"—I shall thank you for the Ormer shells and roots; and shall desire your permission to finish my letter already. As the parliament is to meet so soon, you are likely to be overpowered with my dispatches.—I have been thinning my wood of trees, and planting them out more into the field: I am fitting up the old kitchen for a china-room: I am building a bed-chamber for myself over the old blue-room, in which I intend to die, though not yet; and some trifles of this kind, which I do not specify to you, because I intend to reserve a little to be quite new to you. Adieu.!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

Arlington-street, November 16, 1755.

NEVER was poor invulnerable immortality so soon brought to shame! Alack! I have had the gout! I would fain have persuaded myself that it was a sprain; and, then, that it was only the gout come to look for Mr. Chute at Strawberry-hill: but none of my evasions will do! I was, certainly, lame for two days; and though I repelled it—first, by getting wet-shod, and then by spirits of camphire; and though I have since tamed it more rationally by leaving off the little wine I drank, I still know where to look for it whenever I have an occasion for a political illness.—Come, my

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Y y

constitution

constitution is not very much broken, when in four days after such a mortifying attack, I could sit in the house of commons, full as possible, from two at noon till past five in the morning, as we did but last Thursday. The new opposition attacked the address.—Who are the new opposition?—Why, the old opposition: Pitt and the Grenvilles; indeed, with Legge instead of sir George Lyttelton. Judge how entertaining it was to me, to hear Lyttelton answer Grenville, and Pitt Lyttelton! The debate, long and uninterrupted as it was, was a great deal of it extremely fine: the numbers did not answer to the merit: the new friends, the duke of Newcastle and Mr. Fox, had 311 to 105. The bon-mot in fashion is, that the staff was very good, but they wanted private men. Pitt surpassed himself, and then I need not tell you that he surpassed Cicero and Demosthenes. What a figure would they, with their formal, laboured, cabinet orations, make vis-à-vis his manly vivacity and dashing eloquence at one o'clock in the morning, after sitting in that heat for eleven hours! He spoke above an hour and a half, with scarce a bad sentence: the most admired part was a comparison he drew of the two parts of the new administration, to the conflux of the Rhone and the Saone; “the latter a gentle, feeble, languid stream, languid but not deep; the other a boisterous and overbearing torrent: but they join at last; and long may they continue united, to the comfort of each other, and to the glory, honour and happiness of this nation!” I hope you are not mean-spirited enough to dread an invasion, when the senatorial contests are reviving in the temple of Concord.—*But will it make a party?* Yes, truly; I never saw so promising a prospect. Would not it be cruel, at such a period, to be laid up?

I have only had a note from you to promise me a letter; but it is not arrived:—but the partridges are, and well; and I thank you.

*England seems returning*¹: for those who are not in parliament, there are nightly riots at Drury-lane, where there is an anti-Gallican party against some French dancers. The young men of quality have protected them till last night, when, being opera night, the galleries were victorious.

Montagu writes me many kind things for you: he is in Cheshire, but

¹ He means the disposition towards mobs and rioting at public places, which was then common among young men, and had been a sort of fashion in his early youth. E.

comes to town this winter. Adieu! I have so much to say, that I have time to say but very little.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. G. Selwyn hearing much talk of a sea-war or a continent, said, "I am for a sea-war and a *continent* admiral."

LETTER XXXIV.

Arlington-street, December 17, 1755.

AFTER an immense interval, I have at last received a long letter from you, of a very old date (November 5th), which amply indemnifies my patience; nay, almost makes me amends for your blindness; for I think, unless you had totally lost your eyes, you would not refuse me a pleasure so easy to yourself, as now and then sending me a drawing.—I can't call it laziness—one may be too idle to amuse one's self; but sure one is never so fond of idleness as to prefer it to the power of obliging a person one loves! And yet I own your letter has made me amends; the wit of your pen recompenses the stupidity of your pencil; the *castus* you have taken up supplies a little the *artem* you have relinquished. I could quote twenty passages that have charmed me: the picture of lady Prudence and her family; your idol that gave you hail when you prayed for sunshine; misfortune the teacher of superstition; unmarried people being the fashion in heaven; the *Spectator*-hacked phrases; Mr. Spence's blindness to Pope's mortality; and above all, the criticism on the queen in Hamlet is most delightful. There never was so good a ridicule of all the formal commentators on Shakespear, nor so artful a banter on him himself for so improperly making her majesty deal in doubles entendres at a funeral! In short, I never heard as much wit except in a speech with which Mr. Pitt concluded the debate t'other day on the treaties. His antagonists endeavour to disarm him; but as fast as they deprive him of one weapon, he finds a better—I never suspected him of such an universal armoury—I knew he had a Gorgon's head composed of bayonets and pistols, but little thought that he could tickle to death with a feather. On the first debate on these famous treaties, last Wednesday,

Y y 2

Hume

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Hume Campbell, whom the duke of N. had retained as the most abusive counsel he could find against Pitt (and hereafter perhaps against Fox), attacked the former for *eternal invectives*. Oh! since the last Philippic of Billingsgate memory, you never heard such an invective as Pitt returned—Hume Campbell was annihilated! Pitt like an angry wasp seems to have left his sting in the wound—and has since assumed a style of delicate ridicule and repartee—But think how charming a ridicule must that be that lasts and rises, flash after flash, for an hour and a half! Some day or other perhaps you will see some of the glittering splinters that I gathered up. I have written under his print these lines, which are not only full as just as the original, but have not the tautology of *loftiness* and *majesty*:

Three orators in distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn:
The first in loftiness of thought surpass'd,
The next in language, but in both the last:
The pow'r of nature could no farther go;
To make a third, she join'd the former two.

Indeed we have wanted such an entertainment to enliven and make the fatigue supportable. We sat on Wednesday till ten at night; on Friday till past three in the morning; on Monday till between nine and ten. We have profusion of orators, and many very great, which is surprising so soon after the leaden age of the late right honourable Henry Saturnus¹! The majorities are as great as in Saturnus's *golden* age.

Our changes are begun; but not being made at once, our very changes change! Lord Duplin and lord Darlington are made joint pay-masters: George Selwyn says, that no act ever showed so much the duke of Newcastle's absolute power, as his being able to make lord Darlington a *pay-master*. That so often *repatriated* and *reprostituted* prostitute Doddington is again to be treasurer of the navy: and he again drags out Harry Furnese into the treasury. The duke of Leeds is to be cofferer, and lord Sandwich emerges so far as to be chief justice in Eyre.—The other parts by the comedians—I don't repeat their names, because perhaps the fellow that to-day is designed to act Guildenstern, may to-morrow be destined to play

¹ Mr. Pelham.

half the part of the second grave-digger. However, they are all to kiss hands on Saturday. Mr. Pitt told me to-day that he should not go to Bath till next week. I fancy, said I, you scarce stay to kiss hands.

With regard to the invasion, which you are so glad to be allowed to fear, I must tell you that it is quite gone out of fashion again, and I really believe was dressed up for a vehicle (as the apothecaries call it) to make us swallow the treaties. All along the coast of France they are much more afraid of an invasion than we are!

As obliging as you are in sending me plants, I am determined to thank you for nothing but drawings. I am not to be bribed to silence, when you really disoblige me. Mr. Müntz has ordered more cloths for you. I even shall send you books unwillingly; and indeed why should I? As you are stone blind, what can you do with them? The few I shall send you, for there are scarce any new, will be a pretty dialogue by Crébillon; a strange imperfect poem, written by Voltaire when he was very young, which with some charming strokes has a great deal of humour manqué and of impiety estropiée; and an historical romance, by him too, of the last war, in which is so outrageous a lying anecdote of old Marlborough, as would have convinced her, that when poets write history they stick as little to truth in prose as in verse. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXV.

Strawberry-hill, January 6, 1756.

I AM quite angry with you; you write me letters so entertaining, that they make me almost forgive your not drawing: now, you know, next to being disagreeable there is nothing so shocking as being too agreeable. However, as I am a true philosopher, and can resist any thing I like, when it is to obtain any thing I like better, I declare, that if you don't coin the vast ingot of colours and cloth that I have sent you, I will burn your letters unopened.

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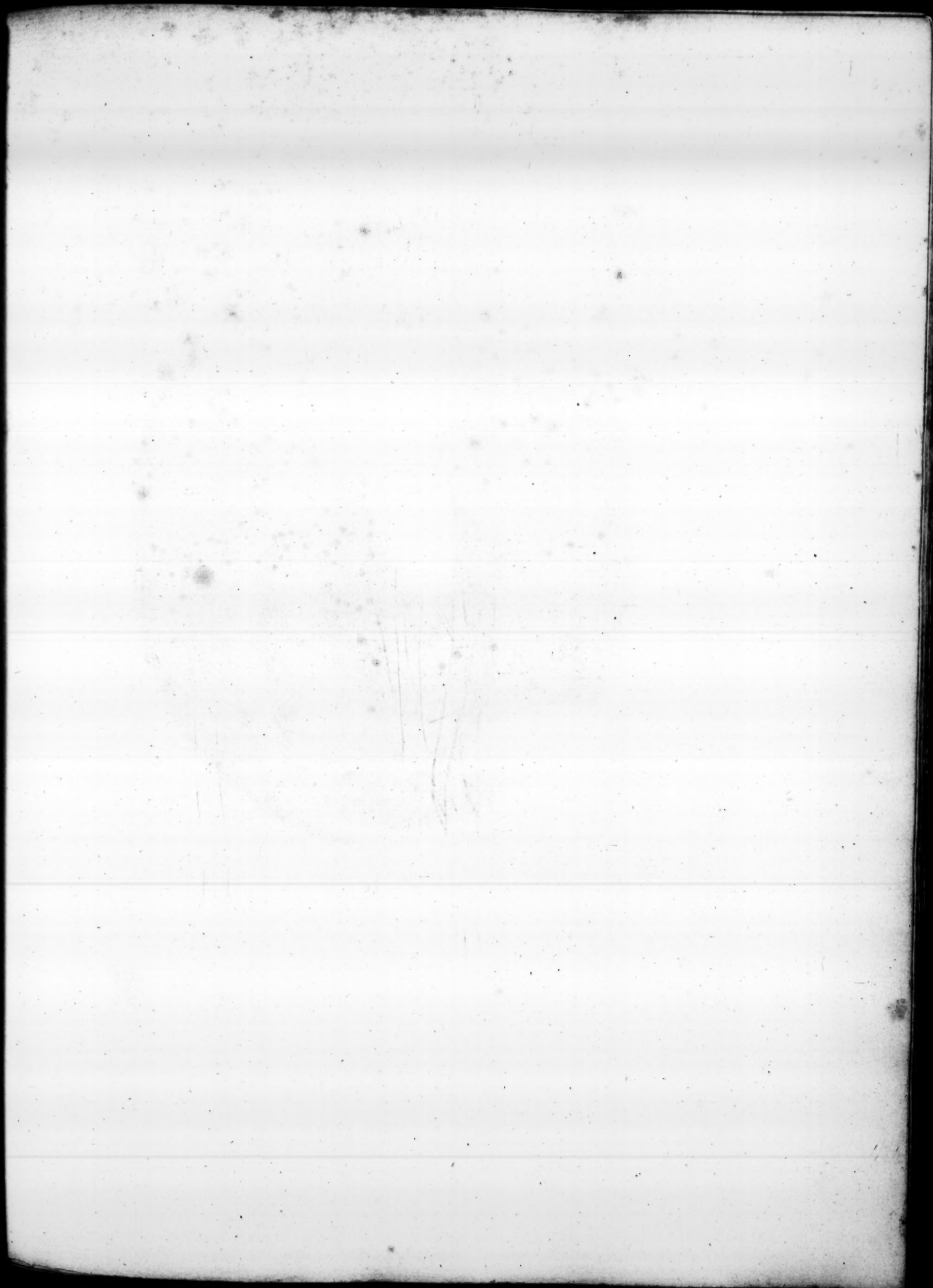
Thank you for all your concern about my gout—but I shall not mind you; it shall appear in my stomach, before I attempt to keep it out of it by a fortification of wine: I only drank a little two days after being very much fatigued in the house, and the worthy pioneer began to cry *swear* from my foot the next day. However, though I am determined to feel young still, I grow to take the hints age gives me—I come hither oftener, I leave the town to the young; and though the busy turn that the world has taken draws me back into it, I excuse it to myself, and call it retiring into politics. From hence I must retire, or I shall be drowned; my cellars are four feet under water, the Thames gives itself Rhone airs, and the meadows are more flooded than when you first saw this place and thought it so dreary. We seem to have taken out our earthquake in rain: since the third week in June, there have not been five days together of dry weather. They tell us that at Colnbrook and Staines they are forced to live in the first floor. Mr. Chute is at the Vine, but I don't expect to hear from him; no post but a dove can get from thence. Every post brings new earthquakes; they have felt them in France, Sweden, and Germany:—what a convulsion there has been in nature! Sir Isaac Newton, somewhere in his works, has this beautiful expression, The globe will want *manum emendatricem*.

I have been here this week with only Mr. Müntz; from whence you may conclude I have been employed—Memoires thrive apace. He seems to wonder (for he has not a little of your indolence, I am not surprised you took to him) that I am continually occupied every minute of the day, reading, writing, forming plans: in short, you know me. He is an inoffensive good creature, but had rather ponder over a foreign gazette than a pallet.

I expect to find George Montagu in town to-morrow: his brother has at last got a regiment. Not content with having deserved it, before he got it, by distinguished bravery and indefatigable duty, he persists in meriting it still. He immediately, unasked, gave the chaplainship (which others always sell advantageously) to his brother's parson at Greatworth. I am almost afraid it will make my commendation of this really handsome action look interested, when I add, that he has obliged me in the same way, by making Mr. Mann his clothier, before I had time to apply for it. Adieu! I find no news in town.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.





Ecceardt pinx.

Heath Sculp.

Thomas Gray.

Pub^d as the Act directs May 1st 1798. by G.G. & J. Robinson Paternoster Row London.

L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THOMAS GRAY,

From the Year 1753 to the Year 1768 :

WITH

SOME LETTERS IN ANSWER

FROM MR. GRAY.

LETTERS

FROM

THE HON. HONORABLE W. A. F. O. L. E.

THOMAS C. J. K.

FROM

LETTERS

BETWEEN

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

AND

THOMAS GRAY,

From the Year 1753 to the Year 1768.

LETTER I.

To THOMAS GRAY.

Arlington-street, Feb. 20, 1753.

I AM very sorry that the haste I made to deliver you from your uneasiness the first moment after I received your letter, should have made me express myself in a manner to have the quite contrary effect from what I intended. You well know how rapidly and carelessly I always write my letters: the note you mention was written in a still greater hurry than ordinary, and merely to put you out of pain. I had not seen Doddsley, consequently could only tell you that I did not doubt but he would have no objection to satisfy you, as you was willing to prevent his being a loser by the plate¹. Now, from this declaration, how is it possible for you to have for

¹ This was a print of Mr. Gray, after the portrait of him by Eckardt, at Strawberry-hill, from which the print prefixed to these letters is taken. It was intended to have been prefixed to Doddsley's

4th edition of his Odes, with Mr. Bentley's designs; but Mr. Gray's extreme repugnance to the proposal obliged his friends to drop it. E.

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one moment put such a construction upon my words, as would have been a downright stupid brutality, unprovoked? It is impossible for me to recollect my very expression, but I am confident that I have repeated the whole substance.

How the bookseller would be less a loser by being at more expence, I can easily explain to you. He feared the price of half-a-guinea would seem too high to most purchasers. If by the expence of ten guineas more he could make the book appear so much more rich and showy as to induce people to think it cheap, the profits from selling many more copies would amply recompense him for his additional disbursement.

The thought of having the head engraved was entirely Doddsley's own, and against my opinion, as I concluded it would be against yours; which made me determine to acquaint you with it before its appearance.

When you reflect on what I have said now, you will see very clearly, that I had and could have no other possible meaning in what I wrote last. You might justly have accused me of neglect, if I had deferred giving you all the satisfaction in my power, as soon as ever I knew your uneasiness.

The head I give up. The title I think will be wrong, and not answer your purpose; for, as the drawings are evidently calculated for the poems, why will the improper disposition of the word *designs* before *poems* make the edition less yours? I am as little convinced that there is any affectation in leaving out the *Mr.* before your names: it is a barbarous addition: the other is simple and classic; a rank I cannot help thinking due to both the poet and painter. Without ranging myself among classics, I assure you, were I to print any thing with my name, it should be plain Horace Walpole: *Mr.* is one of the Gothicisms I abominate*. The explanation² was certainly added for people who have not eyes:—such are almost all who have seen Mr. Bentley's drawings, and think to compliment him by mistaking them for prints. Alas! the generality want as much to have the words a man,

* By Mr. Walpole's having prefixed this "Gothicism" to his name in several works published subsequent to the date of this letter, it is to be supposed that Mr. Gray's opinion on this point had converted Mr. Walpole. E.

² Of Mr. Bentley's designs.

a cock,

a cock, written under his drawings, as under the most execrable hieroglyphics of Egypt, or of sign-post painters!

I will say no more now, but that you must not wonder if I am partial to you and yours, when you can write as you do and yet feel so little vanity. I have used freedoms enough with your writings to convince you I speak truth: I praise and scold Mr. Bentley immoderately, as I think he draws well or ill: I never think it worth my while to do either, especially to blame, where there are not generally vast excellencies.—Good-night!—Don't suspect me when I have no fault but impatience to make you easy.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER II

Arlington-street, Feb. 15, 1759.

THE enclosed, which I have this minute received from Mr. Bentley, explains much that I had to say to you—yet I have a question or two more.

Who and what sort of man is a Mr. Sharp of Benet? I have received a most obliging and genteel letter from him, with the very letter of Edward VI. which you was so good as to send me. I have answered his, but should like to know a little more about him. Pray thank the dean of Lincoln too for me: I am much obliged to him for his offer, but had rather draw upon his *Lincolnship* than his *Cambridgehood*¹. In the library of the former are some original letters of Tiptoft, as you will find in my catalogue. When Dr. Greene is there, I shall be glad if he will let me have them copied.

I will thank you if you will look in some provincial history of Ireland for Odo (Hugh) Oneil king of Ulster. When did he live? I have got a most curious seal of his, and know no more of him than of Ouacraw king of the Pawwaws.

¹ He was master of Benet-college, Cambridge.

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I wanted to ask you, whether you, or any body that you believe in, believe in the queen of Scots' letter to queen Elizabeth¹.—If it is genuine, I don't wonder she cut her head off—but I think it must be some forgery that was not made use of.

Now to my distress.—You must have seen an advertisement, perhaps the book itself, the villainous book itself, that has been published to defend me against the Critical Review². I have been childishly unhappy about it, and had drawn up a protestation or affidavit of my knowing nothing of it; but my friends would not let me publish it. I sent to the printer, who would not discover the author—nor could I guess. They tell me nobody can suspect my being privy to it: but there is an intimacy affected that I think will deceive many—and yet I must be the most arrogant fool living, if I could know and suffer any body to speak of me in that style. For God's sake, do all you can for me, and publish my abhorrence. To-day I am told that it is that puppy doctor Hill, who has chosen to make war with the magazines through my fides. I could pardon him any abuse, but I never can forgive this *friendship*. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER III.

Paris, Nov. 19, 1765.

YOU are very kind to enquire so particularly after my gout. I wish I may not be too circumstantial in my answer: but you have tapped a dangerous topic; I can talk gout by the hour. It is my great mortification, and has disappointed all the hopes that I had built on temperance and hardiness. I have resisted like a hermit, and exposed myself to all weathers and seasons like a smuggler; and in vain. I have however still so much of the obsti-

¹ See Murden's State Papers, page 558, for this curious letter. E.

² It was called "Observations on the account given of the Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors of England, &c. &c. in article vi. of the

Critical Review, N° 25, for December 1758, where the unwarrantable liberties taken with that work and the honourable author of it are examined and exposed."

nary of both professions left, that I think I shall continue, and cannot obey you in keeping myself warm. I have gone through my second fit under one blanket, and already go about in a silk waistcoat with my bosom unbuttoned. In short, I am as prejudiced to my regimen, though so ineffectual, as I could have been to all I expected from it. The truth is, I am almost as willing to have the gout as to be liable to catch cold ; and must run up stairs and down, in and out of doors, when I will, or I cannot have the least satisfaction. This will convince you how readily I comply with another of your precepts, walking as soon as I am able.—For receipts, you may trust me for making use of none : I would not see a physician at the worst, but have quacked myself as boldly as quacks treat others. I laughed at your idea of quality-receipts, it came so à-propos. There is not a man or woman here that is not a perfect old nurse, and who does not talk gruel and anatomy with equal fluency and ignorance. One instance shall serve : madame de Bouzols, marshal Berwick's daughter, assured me there was nothing so good for the gout, as to preserve the parings of my nails in a bottle close stopped. When I try any illustrious nostrum, I shall give the preference to this.

So much for the gout ! I told you what was coming. As to the ministry, I know and care very little about them. I told you and told them long ago, that if ever a change happened I would bid adieu to politics for ever. Do me the justice to allow that I have not altered with the times. I was so impatient to put this resolution in execution, that I hurried out of England before I was sufficiently recovered. I shall not run the same hazard again in haste ; but will stay here till I am perfectly well, and the season of warm weather coming on or arrived ; though the charms of Paris have not the least attraction for me, nor would keep me here an hour on their own account. For the city itself, I cannot conceive where my eyes were : it is the ugliest, beastly town in the universe. I have not seen a mouthful of verdure out of it, nor have they any thing green but their treillage and window-shutters. Trees cut into fire-shovels, and stuck into pedestals of chalk, compose their country. Their boasted knowledge of society is reduced to talking of their suppers, and every malady they have about them, or know of. The dauphin is at the point of death : every morning the physicians frame an account of him ; and happy is he or she who can produce a copy of this lie, called a *bulletin*. The night before last, one of these was produced at supper where I was : it was read, and said he had had *une évacuation fétide*.
I beg

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I beg your pardon, though you are not at supper. The old lady of the house (who by the way is quite blind, was the regent's mistress for a fortnight, and is very agreeable) called out, Oh! they have forgot to mention that he threw down his chamber-pot, and was forced to change his bed. There were present several women of the first rank; as madame de la Valiere, whom you remember duchesse de Vaujour, and who is still miraculously pretty though fifty-three; a very handsome madame de Forcalquier, and others—nor was this conversation at all particular to that evening.

Their gaiety is not greater than their delicacy—but I will not expatiate. In short, they are another people from what they were. They may be growing wise, but the intermediate passage is dulness. Several of the women are agreeable, and some of the men; but the latter are in general vain and ignorant. The *scavants*—I beg their pardons, the *philosophes*—are insupportable, superficial, overbearing and fanatic: they preach incessantly, and their avowed doctrine is atheism; you would not believe how openly—Don't wonder therefore if I should return a Jesuit. Voltaire himself does not satisfy them. One of their lady-devotes said of him, *Il est bigot, c'est un déiste*.

I am as little pleased with their taste in trifles. Crebillon is entirely out of fashion, and Marivaux a proverb: *marivauder* and *marivaudage* are established terms for being prolix and tiresome.—I thought that we were fallen, but they are ten times lower.

Notwithstanding all I have said, I have found two or three societies that please me; am amused with the novelty of the whole, and should be sorry not to have come. The Dumenil is, if possible, superior to what you remember. I am sorry not to see the Clairon; but several persons whose judgments seem the soundest prefer the former. Preville is admirable in low comedy. The mixture of Italian comedy and comic operas prettily written, and set to Italian music, at the same theatre, is charming, and gets the better both of their operas and French comedy; the latter of which is seldom full, with all its merit. Petit-mâtres are obsolete, like our lords Foppington—*Tout le monde est philosophe*—When I grow very sick of this last nonsense, I go and compose myself at the Chartreuse, where I am almost tempted to prefer Le Sœur to every painter I know—Yet what new old treasures

treasures are come to light, routed out of the Louvre, and thrown into new lumber-rooms at Versailles!—But I have not room to tell you what I have seen! I will keep this and other chapters for Strawberry. Adieu! and thank you.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Old Mariette has shown me a print by Diepenbecke of the duke and duchess of Newcastle at dinner with their family. You would oblige me, if you would look into all their graces' folios, and see if it is not a frontispiece to some one of them. Then he has such a *Petitot* of madame d'Olonne! The Pompadour offered him fifty louis for it—Alack, so would I!

LETTER IV.

Cambridge, December 13, 1765.

I AM very much obliged to you for the detail you enter into on the subject of your own health: in this you cannot be too circumstantial for me, who had received no account of you, but at second hand—such as, that you were dangerously ill, and therefore went to France; that you meant to try a better climate, and therefore staid at Paris; that you had relapsed, and were confined to your bed, and extremely in vogue, and supped in the best company, and were at all public diversions. I rejoice to find (improbable as it seemed) that all the wonderful part of this is strictly true, and that the serious part has been a little exaggerated. This latter I conclude not so much from your own account of yourself, as from the spirits in which I see you write; and long may they continue to support you! I mean in a reasonable degree of elevation: but if (take notice) they are so volatile, so flippant, as to suggest any of those doctrines of health, which you preach with all the zeal of a French atheist; at least, if they really do influence your practice; I utterly renounce them and all their works. They are *evil spirits*, and will lead you to destruction.—You have long built your hopes on temperance, you say, and hardiness. On the first point we are agreed. The second has totally disappointed you, and *therefore*

you will persist in it; by all means. But then be sure to persist too in being young, in stopping the course of time, and making the shadow return back upon your sun-dial. If you find this not so easy, acquiesce with a good grace in my *anilities*, put on your under-stockings of yarn or woollen, even in the night-time. Don't provoke me! or I shall order you two night-caps (which by the way would do your eyes good), and put a little of any French liqueur into your water: they are nothing but brandy and sugar, and among their various flavours some of them may surely be palatable enough. The pain in your feet *I can* bear; but I shudder at the sickness in your stomach, and the weakness, that still continues. I conjure you, as you love yourself; I conjure you by Strawberry, not to trifle with these edge-tools. There is no cure for the gout, when in the stomach, but to throw it into the limbs. There is no relief for the gout in the limbs, but in gentle warmth and gradual perspiration.

I was much entertained with your account of our neighbours. As an Englishman and an Antigallican, I rejoice at their dulness and their nastiness: though I fear we shall come to imitate them in both. Their atheism is a little too much, too shocking to rejoice at. I have been long sick at it in their authors, and hated them for it: but I pity their poor innocent people of fashion. They were bad enough, when they believed every thing!

I have searched where you directed me; which I could not do sooner, as I was at London when I received your letter, and could not easily find her grace's works. Here they abound in every library. The print you ask after is the frontispiece to *Nature's pictures drawn by Fancy's pencil*. But lest there should be any mistake, I must tell you, the family are not at dinner, but sitting round a rousing fire and telling stories. The room is just such a one as we lived in at Rheims: I mean as to the glazing and ceiling. The chimney is supported by cariatides: over the mantle-piece the arms of the family. The duke and duchess are crowned with laurel. A servant stands behind him, holding a hat and feather. Another is shutting a window. Diepenbeeke delin. & (I think) S. Clouwe sculp. It is a very pretty and curious print, and I thank you for the sight of it. If it ever was a picture, what a picture to have!

I must

I must tell you, that upon cleaning an old picture here at St. John's Lodge, which I always took for a Holbein; on a ring, which the figure wears, they have found H. H. It has been always called B. V. Fisher; but is plainly a layman, and probably sir Anthony Denny, who was a benefactor to the college.

What is come of your Sevigné-curiosity? I should be glad of a line now and then, when you have leisure. I wish you well, and am ever

Yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER V.

Paris, January 25, 1766.

I AM much indebted to you for your kind letter and advice; and though it is late to thank you for it, it is at least a stronger proof that I do not forget it. However, I am a little obstinate, as you know, on the chapter of health, and have persisted through this Siberian winter in not adding a grain to my clothes, and in going open-breasted without an under-waistcoat. In short, though I like extremely to live, it must be in my own way, as long as I can: it is not youth I court, but liberty; and I think making one's self tender, is issuing a *general warrant* against one's own person. I suppose I shall submit to confinement, when I cannot help it; but I am indifferent enough to life not to care if it ends soon after my prison begins.

I have not delayed so long to answer your letter, from not thinking of it, or from want of matter, but from want of time. I am constantly occupied, engaged, amused, till I cannot bring a hundredth part of what I have to say into the compass of a letter. You will lose nothing by this: you know my volubility, when I am full of new subjects; and I have at least many hours of conversation for you at my return. One does not learn a whole nation in four or five months; but, for the time, few, I believe, have seen, studied, or got so much acquainted with the French as I have.

By what I said of their religious or rather irreligious opinions, you must not conclude their people of quality, atheists—at least not the men—Happily for them, poor souls! they are not capable of going so far into thinking. They assent to a great deal, because it is the fashion, and because they don't know how to contradict. They are ashamed to defend the Roman catholic religion, because it is quite exploded; but I am convinced they believe it in their hearts. They hate the parliaments and the philosophers, and are rejoiced that they may still idolize royalty. At present too they are a little triumphant: the court has shown a little spirit, and the parliaments much less: but as the duc de Choiseul, who is very fluttering, unsettled, and inclined to the philosophers, has made a compromise with the parliament of Bretagne, the parliaments might venture out again, if, as I fancy will be the case, they are not glad to drop a cause, of which they began to be a little weary of the inconveniencies.

The generality of the men, and more than the generality, are dull and empty. They have taken up gravity, thinking it was philosophy and English, and so have acquired nothing in the room of their natural levity and cheerfulness. However, as their high opinion of their own country remains, for which they can no longer assign any reason, they are contemptuous and reserved, instead of being ridiculously, consequently pardonably, impertinent. I have wondered, knowing my own countrymen, that we had attained such a superiority.—I wonder no longer, and have a little more respect for English *heads* than I had.

The women do not seem of the same country: if they are less gay than they were, they are more informed, enough to make them very conversable. I know six or seven with very superior understandings; some of them with wit, or with softness, or very good sense.

Madame Geoffrin, of whom you have heard much, is an extraordinary woman, with more common sense than I almost ever met with. Great quickness in discovering characters, penetration in going to the bottom of them, and a pencil that never fails in a likeness—feldom a favourable one. She exacts and preserves, spite of her birth and their nonsensical prejudices about nobility, great court and attention. This she acquires by a thousand little arts and offices of friendship; and by a freedom and severity, which

which seems to be her sole end of drawing a concourse to her ; for she insists on scolding those she inveigles to her. She has little taste and less knowledge, but protects artisans and authors, and courts a few people to have the credit of serving her dependents. She was bred under the famous madame Tencin, who advised her never to refuse any man ; for, said her mistress, though nine in ten should not care a farthing for you, the tenth may live to be an useful friend. She did not adopt or reject the whole plan, but fully retained the purport of the maxim. In short, she is an epitome of empire, subsisting by rewards and punishments. Her great enemy, madame du Deffand, was for a short time mistress of the regent, is now very old and stone blind, but retains all her vivacity, wit, memory, judgment, passions and agreeableness. She goes to operas, plays, suppers, and Versailles ; gives suppers twice a week ; has every thing new read to her ; makes new songs and epigrams, aye, admirably, and remembers every one that has been made these fourscore years. She corresponds with Voltaire, dictates charming letters to him, contradicts him, is no bigot to him or any body, and laughs both at the clergy and the philosophers. In a dispute, into which she easily falls, she is very warm, and yet scarce ever in the wrong : her judgment on every subject is as just as possible ; on every point of conduct as wrong as possible : for she is all love and hatred, passionate for her friends to enthusiasm, still anxious to be loved, I don't mean by lovers, and a vehement enemy, but openly. As she can have no amusement but conversation, the least solitude and ennui are insupportable to her, and put her into the power of several worthless people, who eat her suppers when they can eat nobody's of higher rank ; wink to one another and laugh at her ; hate her because she has forty times more parts—and venture to hate her because she is not rich. She has an old friend whom I must mention, a monsieur Pondeville, author of the *Fat puni*, and the *Complaisant*, and of those pretty novels, the *Comte de Cominge*, the *Siege of Calais*, and *les Malheurs de l'Amour*. Would not you expect this old man to be very agreeable ? He can be so, but seldom is : yet he has another very different and very amusing talent, the art of parody, and is unique in his kind. He composes tales to the tunes of long dances : for instance, he has adapted the Regent's *Daphnis and Chloe* to one, and made it ten times more indecent ; but is so old and sings it so well, that it is permitted in all companies. He has succeeded still better in *les caracteres de la danse*, to which he has adapted words that express all the characters

of love. With all this, he has not the least idea of cheerfulness in conversation; seldom speaks but on grave subjects, and not often on them; is a humourist, very supercilious, and wrapt up in admiration of his own country, as the only judge of his merit. His air and look are cold and forbidding; but ask him to sing, or praise his works, his eyes and smiles open and brighten up. In short, I can show him to you: the self-applauding poet in Hogarth's *Rake's Progress*, the second print, is so like his very features and very wig, that you would know him by it, if you came hither—for he certainly will not go to you.

Madame de Mirepoix's understanding is excellent of the useful kind, and can be so when she pleases of the agreeable kind. She has read, but seldom shows it, and has perfect taste. Her manner is cold, but very civil; and she conceals even the blood of Lorraine, without ever forgetting it. Nobody in France knows the world better, and nobody is personally so well with the king. She is false, artful, and insinuating beyond measure when it is her interest, but indolent and a coward. She never had any passion but gaming, and always loses. For ever paying court, the sole produce of a life of art is to get money from the king to carry on a course of paying debts or contracting new ones, which she discharges as fast as she is able. She advertised devotion to get made dame du palais to the queen; and the very next day this princess of Lorraine was seen riding backwards with madame Pompadour in the latter's coach. When the king was stabbed and heartily frightened, the mistress took a panic too, and consulted d'Argenson, whether she had not best make off in time. He hated her, and said, By all means. Madame de Mirepoix advised her to stay. The king recovered his spirits, d'Argenson was banished, and la marechale inherited part of the mistress's credit.—I must interrupt my history of illustrious women with an anecdote of monsieur de Maurepas, with whom I am much acquainted, and who has one of the few heads that approach to good ones, and who luckily for us was disgraced, and the marine dropped, because it was his favourite object and province. He employed Pondeville to make a song on the Pompadour: it was clever and bitter, and did not spare even majesty. This was Maurepas absurd enough to sing at supper at Versailles. Banishment ensued; and lest he should ever be restored, the mistress persuaded the king that he had poisoned her predecessor madame de Chateauroux. Maurepas is very agreeable, and exceedingly cheerful;

cheerful ; yet I have seen a transient silent cloud when politics are talked of.

Madame de Boufflers, who was in England, is a *çavante*, mistress of the prince of Conti, and very desirous of being his wife. She is two women, the upper and the lower. I need not tell you that the lower is galant, and still has pretensions. The upper is very sensible too, and has a measured eloquence that is just and pleasing—but all is spoiled by an unrelaxed attention to applause. You would think she was always sitting for her picture to her biographer.

Madame de Rochfort is different from all the rest. Her understanding is just and delicate; with a finesse of wit that is the result of reflection. Her manner is soft and feminine, and, though a *çavante*, without any declared pretensions. She is the *decent* friend of monsieur de Nivernois, for you must not believe a syllable of what you read in their novels. It requires the greatest curiosity, or the greatest habitude, to discover the smallest connection between the sexes here. No familiarity, but under the veil of friendship, is permitted, and love's dictionary is as much prohibited, as at first sight one should think his ritual was. All you hear, and that pronounced with nonchalance, is, that *monsieur un tel* has had *madame une telle*. The duc de Nivernois has parts, and writes at the top of the mediocre, but, as madame Geoffrin says, is *manqué par tout*; *guerrier manqué, ambassadeur manqué, homme d'affaires manqué*, and *auteur manqué*—no, he is not *homme de naissance manqué*. He would think freely, but has some ambition of being governor to the dauphin, and is more afraid of his wife and daughter, who are ecclesiastic fagots. The former out-chatters the duke of Newcastle; and the latter, madame de Gisors, exhausts Mr. Pitt's eloquence in defence of the archbishop of Paris. Monsieur de Nivernois lives in a small circle of dependent admirers, and madame de Rochfort is high priestess for a small salary of credit.

The duchess of Choiseul, the only young one of these heroines, is not very pretty, but has fine eyes, and is a little model in wax-work, which not being allowed to speak for some time as incapable, has a hesitation and modesty, the latter of which the court has not cured, and the former of which is atoned for by the most interesting sound of voice, and forgotten in

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in the most elegant turn and propriety of expression. Oh! it is the gentlest, amiable, civil, little creature that ever came out of a fairy egg! So just in its phrases and thoughts, so attentive and good-natured! Every body loves it, but its husband, who prefers his own sister the duchesse de Grammont, an amazonian, fierce, haughty dame, who loves and hates arbitrarily, and is detested. Madame de Choiseul, passionately fond of her husband, was the martyr of this union, but at last submitted with a good grace; has gained a little credit with him, and is still believed to idolize him—But I doubt it—she takes too much pains to profess it.

I cannot finish my list without adding a much more common character—but more complete in its kind than any of the foregoing, the marechale de Luxembourg. She has been very handsome, very abandoned, and very mischievous. Her beauty is gone, her lovers are gone, and she thinks the devil is coming. This dejection has softened her into being rather agreeable, for she has wit and good-breeding; but you would swear, by the restlessness of her person and the horrors she cannot conceal, that she had signed the compact, and expected to be called upon in a week for the performance.

I could add many pictures, but none so remarkable. In those I send you, there is not a feature bestowed gratis or exaggerated. For the beauties, of which there are a few considerable, as mesdames de Brionne, de Monaco, et d'Egmont, they have not yet lost their characters, nor got any.

You must not attribute my intimacy with Paris to curiosity alone. An accident unlocked the doors for me. That *passé-par-tout*, called the fashion, has made them fly open—and what do you think was that fashion?—I myself—Yes, like queen Elinor in the ballad, I sunk at Charing-cross, and have risen in the fauxbourg St. Germain. A *plaisanterie* on Rousseau, whose arrival here in his way to you brought me acquainted with many anecdotes conformable to the idea I had conceived of him, got about, was liked much more than it deserved, spread like wild-fire, and made me the subject of conversation. Rousseau's devotees were offended. Madame de Boufflers, with a tone of sentiment, and the accents of lamenting humanity, abused me heartily, and then complained to myself with the utmost softness. I acted contrition, but had like to have spoiled all, by growing dreadfully tired of a
second

second lecture from the prince of Conti, who took up the ball, and made himself the hero of a history wherein he had nothing to do. I listened, did not understand half he said (nor he neither), forgot the rest, said Yes when I should have said No, yawned when I should have smiled, and was very penitent when I should have rejoiced at my pardon. Madame de Boufflers was more distressed, for he owned twenty times more than I had said: she frowned, and made him signs; but she had wound up his clack, and there was no stopping it. The moment she grew angry, the house of the lord grew charmed, and it has been my fault if I am not at the head of a numerous sect:—but when I left a triumphant party in England, I did not come hither to be at the head of a fashion. However, I have been sent for about like an African prince or a learned canary-bird, and was, in particular, carried by force to the princess of Talmond, the queen's cousin, who lives in a charitable apartment in the Luxembourg, and was sitting on a small bed hung with saints and Sobieskis, in a corner of one of those vast chambers, by two blinking tapers. I stumbled over a cat, a foot-stool, and a chamber-pot in my journey to her presence. She could not find a syllable to say to me, and the visit ended with her begging a lap-dog. Thank the Lord! though this is the first month, it is the last week, of my reign; and I shall resign my crown with great satisfaction to a bouillie of chesnuts, which is just invented, and whose annals will be illustrated by so many indigestions, that Paris will not want any thing else these three weeks. I will enclose the fatal letter after I have finished this enormous one; to which I will only add, that nothing has interrupted my Sevigné-researches but the frost. The abbé de Malesherbes has given me full power to ransack Livry. I did not tell you, that by great accident, when I thought on nothing less, I stumbled on an original picture of the comte de Grammont. Adieu! You are generally in London in March: I shall be there by the end of it.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

The letter from the king of Prussia to Rousseau.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Feb. 14, 1768. Pembroke College.

I RECEIVED the book¹ you were so good to send me, and have read it again (indeed I could hardly be said to have read it before) with attention and with pleasure. Your second edition is so rapid in its progress, that it will now hardly answer any purpose to tell you either my own objections, or those of other people. Certain it is, that you are universally read here; but what we think, is not so easy to come at. We stay as usual to see the success, to learn the judgment of the town, to be directed in our opinions by those of more competent judges. If they like you, we shall; if any one of name write against you, we give you up: for we are modest and diffident of ourselves, and not without reason. History in particular is not our *fort*; for (the truth is) we read only modern books and the pamphlets of the day. I have heard it objected, that you raise doubts and difficulties, and do not satisfy them by telling us what was *really* the case. I have heard you charged with disrespect to the king of Prussia; and above all to king William, and the revolution. These are seriously the most sensible things I have heard said, and all that I can recollect. If you please to justify yourself, you may.

My own objections are little more essential: they relate chiefly to inaccuracies of style, which either debase the expression or obscure the meaning. I could point out several small particulars of this kind, and will do so, if you think it can serve any purpose after publication. When I hear you read, they often escape me, partly because I am attending to the subject, and partly because from habit I understand you where a stranger might often be at a loss.

As to your arguments, most of the principal points are made out with a clearness and evidence that no one would expect where materials are so scarce. Yet I still suspect Richard of the murder of Henry VI. The chronicler of Croyland charges it full on him, though without a name or any mention of circumstances. The interests of Edward were the interests of Richard too, though the throne were not then in view; and that Henry still stood in their way, they might well imagine, because, though deposed

¹ The Historic Doubts.

and

and imprisoned once before, he had regained his liberty, and his crown; and was still adored by the people. I should think, from the word *tyranni*, the passage was written after Richard had assumed the crown: but, if it was earlier, does not the bare imputation imply very early suspicions at least of Richard's bloody nature, especially in the mouth of a person that was no enemy to the house of York, nor friend to that of Beaufort?

That the duchess of Burgundy, to try the temper of the nation, should set up a false pretender to the throne (when she had the true duke of York in her hands), and that the queen mother (knowing her son was alive) should countenance that design, is a piece of policy utterly incomprehensible; being the most likely means to ruin their own scheme, and throw a just suspicion of fraud and falsehood on the cause of truth, which Henry could not fail to seize, and turn to his own advantage.

Mr. Hume's first query, as far as relates to the queen-mother, will still have some weight. Is it probable, she should give her eldest daughter to Henry, and invite him to claim the crown, unless she had been sure that her sons were then dead? As to her seeming consent to the match between Elizabeth and Richard, she and her daughters were in his power, which appeared now well fixed, his enemies' designs within the kingdom being every where defeated, and Henry unable to raise any considerable force abroad. She was timorous and hopeless; or she might dissemble, in order to cover her secret dealings with Richmond: and if this were the case, she hazarded little, supposing Richard to dissemble too, and never to have thought seriously of marrying his niece.

Another unaccountable thing is, that Richard, a prince of the house of York, undoubtedly brave, clear-sighted, artful, attentive to business; of boundless generosity, as appears from his grants; just and merciful, as his laws and his pardons seem to testify; having subdued the queen and her hated faction, and been called first to the protectorship and then to the crown by the body of the nobility and by the parliament; with the common people to friend (as Carte often asserts), and having nothing against him but the illegitimate family of his brother Edward, and the attainted house of Clarence (both of them within his power);—that such a man should see within a few months Buckingham, his best friend, and almost all the southern and

western counties on one day in arms against him; that, having seen all these insurrections come to nothing, he should march with a gallant army against a handful of needy adventurers, led by a fugitive, who had not the shadow of a title, nor any virtues to recommend him, nor any foreign strength to depend on; that he should be betrayed by almost all his troops, and fall a sacrifice;—all this is to me utterly improbable, and I do not ever expect to see it accounted for.

I take this opportunity to tell you, that Algarotti (as I see in the new edition of his works printed at Leghorn) being employed to buy pictures for the king of Poland, purchased among others the famous Holbein, that was at Venice. It don't appear that he knew any thing of your book: yet he calls it the *consul Meyer and his family*, as if it were then known to be so in that city.

A young man here, who is a diligent reader of your books, an antiquary, and a painter, informs me, that at the Red-lion inn at Newmarket is a piece of tapestry containing the very design of your marriage of Henry the sixth, only with several more figures in it, both men and women; that he would have bought it of the people, but they refused to part with it.

Mr. Mason, who is here, desires to present his respects to you. He says, that to efface from our annals the history of any tyrant is to do an essential injury to mankind: but he forgives it, because you have shown Henry the seventh to be a greater devil than Richard.

Pray do not be out of humour. When you first commenced an author, you exposed yourself to pit, box and gallery. Any coxcomb in the world may come in and hiss, if he pleases; aye, and (what is almost as bad) clap too, and you cannot hinder him. I saw a little squib fired at you in a newspaper by some of the *house of York*, for speaking lightly of chancellors. Adieu!

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

Arlington-street, February 18, 1768.

YOU have sent me a long and very obliging letter, and yet I am extremely out of humour with you. I saw *poems* by *Mr. Gray* advertised: I called directly at Doddsley's to know if this was to be more than a new edition? He was not at home himself, but his foreman told me he thought there were some new pieces, and notes to the whole. It was very unkind, not only to go out of town without mentioning them to me, without showing them to me, but not to say a word of them in this letter. Do you think I am indifferent, or not curious, about what you write? I have ceased to ask you, because you have so long refused to show me any thing. You could not suppose I thought that you never write. No; but I concluded you did not intend, at least yet, to publish what you had written. As you did intend it, I might have expected a month's preference. You will do me the justice to own that I had always rather have seen your writings than have shown you mine; which you know are the most hasty trifles in the world, and which, though I may be fond of the subject when fresh, I constantly forget in a very short time after they are published. This would sound like affectation to others, but will not to you. It would be affected, even to you, to say I am indifferent to fame—I certainly am not, but I am indifferent to almost any thing I have done to acquire it. The greater part are mere compilations; and no wonder they are, as you say, incorrect, when they are commonly written with people in the room, as Richard and the Noble Authors were. But I doubt there is a more intrinsic fault in them; which is, that I cannot correct them. If I write tolerably, it must be at once; I can neither mend nor add. The articles of lord Capel and lord Peterborough, in the second edition of the Noble Authors, cost me more trouble than all the rest together: and you may perceive that the worst part of Richard, in point of ease and style, is what relates to the papers you gave me on Jane Shore, because it was tacked on so long afterwards, and when my impetus was chilled. If some time or other you will take the trouble of pointing out the inaccuracies of it, I shall be much obliged to you: at present I shall meddle no more with it. It has taken its fate; nor did I mean to complain. I found it was condemned indeed before

hand,

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hand, which was what I alluded to. Since publication (as has happened to me before) the success has gone beyond my expectation.

Not only at Cambridge, but here, there have been people wise enough to think me too free with the king of Prussia! A newspaper has talked of my known inveteracy to him.—Truly, I love him as well as I do most kings. The greater offence is my reflection on lord Clarendon. It is forgotten that I had overpraised him before. Pray turn to the new State Papers, from which, *it is said*, he composed his history. You will find they are the papers from which he did *not* compose his history. And yet I admire my lord Clarendon more than these pretended admirers do. But I do not intend to justify myself. I can as little satisfy those who complain that I do not let them know what *really did* happen. If this inquiry can ferret out any truth, I shall be glad. I have picked up a few more circumstances. I now want to know what Perkin Warbeck's proclamation was, which Speed in his history says is preserved by bishop Leslie. If you look in Speed, perhaps you will be able to assist me.

The duke of Richmond and lord Lyttelton agree with you, that I have not disculpated Richard of the murder of Henry VI. I own to you, it is the crime of which in my own mind I believe him most guiltless. Had I thought he committed it, I should never have taken the trouble to apologize for the rest. I am not at all positive or obstinate on your other objections, nor know exactly what I believe on many points of this story. And I am so sincere, that, except a few notes hereafter, I shall leave the matter to be settled or discussed by others. As you have written much too little, I have written a great deal too much, and think only of finishing the two or three other things I have begun—and of those, nothing but the last volume of painters is designed for the present public. What has one to do when turned fifty, but really think of *finishing*?

I am much obliged and flattered by Mr. Mason's approbation, and particularly by having had almost the same thought with him. I said, "People need not be angry at my excusing Richard; I have not diminished their fund of hatred, I have only transferred it from Richard to Henry."—Well, but I have found you close with Mason—No doubt, cry prating I, something

thing will come out. — Oh! no—leave us, both of you, to Annabellas and Epistles to Ferney, that give Voltaire an account of his own tragedies, to Macarony fables that are more unintelligible than Pilpay's are in the original, to Mr. Thornton's hurdy-gurdy poetry, and to Mr. —, who has imitated himself worse than any fop in a magazine would have done. In truth, if you should abandon us, I could not wonder—When Garrick's prologues and epilogues, his own Cymons and farces, and the comedies of the fools that pay court to him, are the delight of the age, it does not deserve any thing better.

Pray read the new account of Corsica. What relates to Paoli will amuse you much. There is a deal about the island and its divisions that one does not care a straw for. The author, Boswell, is a strange being, and, like —, has a rage of knowing any body that ever was talked of. He forced himself upon me at Paris in spite of my teeth and my doors, and I see has given a foolish account of all he could pick up from me about king Theodore. He then took an antipathy to me on Rousseau's account, abused me in the newspapers, and exhorted Rousseau to do so too: but as he came to see me no more, I forgave all the rest. I see he now is a little sick of Rousseau himself, but I hope it will not cure him of his anger to me. However, his book will I am sure entertain you.

I will add but a word or two more. I am criticized for the expression *tinker up*² in the preface. Is this one of those that you object to? I own I think such a low expression, placed to ridicule an absurd instance of wise folly, very forcible. Replace it with an elevated word or phrase, and to my conception it becomes as flat as possible.

George Selwyn says I may, if I please, write historic doubts on the present duke of G—— too. Indeed they would be doubts, for I know nothing certainly.

¹ "I found him close with Swift—Indeed?—
No doubt,
(Cries prating Balbus) something will come out." *Pope's Epistle to Arbuthnot.*
² "The want of records, of letters, of printing, of critics; wars, revolutions, factions, and other causes occasioned these defects in ancient history. Chronology and astronomy are forced to tinker up and reconcile as well as they can those uncertainties."

Preface to Historic Doubts, vol. ii. p. 106.

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Will you be so kind as to look into *Leslie de rebus Scotorum*, and see if Perkin's proclamation is there, and if there, how authenticated. You will find in Speed my reason for asking this.

I have written in such a hurry, I believe you will scarce be able to read my letter—and as I have just been writing French, perhaps the sense may not be clearer than the writing. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VIII.

Pembroke-college, Feb. 25, 1768.

TO your friendly accusation, I am glad I can plead not guilty with a safe conscience. Doddsley told me in the spring that the plates from Mr. Bentley's designs were worn out, and he wanted to have them copied and reduced to a smaller scale for a new edition. I dissuaded him from so silly an expence, and desired he would put in no ornaments at all. The *Long Story* was to be totally omitted, as its only use (that of explaining the prints) was gone: but to supply the place of it in bulk, lest *my works* should be mistaken for the works of a flea, or a pismire, I promised to send him an equal weight of poetry or prose: so, since my return hither, I put up about two ounces of stuff; viz. The Fatal Sisters, The Descent of Odin (of both which you have copies), a bit of something from the Welch, and certain little notes, partly from justice (to acknowledge the debt, where I had borrowed any thing), partly from ill temper, just to tell the gentle reader, that Edward I. was not Oliver Cromwell, nor queen Elizabeth the witch of Endor. This is literally all; and with all this I shall be but a shrimp of an author. I gave leave also to print the same thing at Glasgow; but I doubt my packet has miscarried, for I hear nothing of its arrival as yet. To what you say to me so civilly, that I ought to write more, I reply in your own words (like the pamphleteer, who is going to confute you out of your own mouth), What has one to do, when *turned of fifty*, but really to think of finishing? However, I will be candid (for you seem to be so with me), and avow to you, that till fourscore-and-ten, whenever the humour takes me, I will write,

write, because I like it; and because I like myself better when I do so. If I do not write much, it is because I cannot. As you have not this last plea, I see no reason why you should not continue as long as it is agreeable to yourself, and to all such as have any curiosity or judgment in the subjects you choose to treat. By the way let me tell you (while it is fresh) that lord Sandwich, who was lately dining at Cambridge, speaking (as I am told) handsomely of your book, said, it was pity you did not know that his cousin Manchester had a genealogy of the kings, which came down no lower than to Richard III. and at the end of it were two portraits of Richard and his son, in which that king appeared to be a handsome man. I tell you it as I heard it: perhaps you may think it worth enquiring into.

I have looked into Speed and Leslie. It appears very odd, that Speed in the speech he makes for P. Warbeck, addressed to James IV. of Scotland, should three times cite the *manuscript proclamation* of Perkin, then in the hands of sir Robert Cotton; and yet when he gives us the proclamation afterwards (on occasion of the insurrection in Cornwall) he does not cite any such manuscript. In Casley's Catalogue of the Cotton Library you may see whether this manuscript proclamation still exists or not: if it does, it may be found at the Museum. Leslie will give you no satisfaction at all: though no subject of England, he could not write freely on this matter, as the title of Mary his mistress to the crown of England was derived from that of Henry VII. Accordingly, he every where treats Perkin as an impostor; yet drops several little expressions inconsistent with that supposition. He has preserved no proclamation: he only puts a short speech into Perkin's mouth, the substance of which is taken by Speed, and translated in the end of his, which is a good deal longer: the whole matter is treated by Leslie very concisely and superficially. I can easily transcribe it, if you please; but I do not see that it could answer any purpose.

Mr. Boswell's book I was going to recommend to you, when I received your letter: it has pleased and moved me strangely, all (I mean) that relates to Paoli. He is a man born two thousand years after his time! The pamphlet proves what I have always maintained, that any fool may write a most valuable book by chance, if he will only tell us what he heard and saw with veracity. Of Mr. Boswell's truth I have not the least suspicion, because I am sure he could invent nothing of this kind. The true title of this part of his work is, A Dialogue between a Green-goose and a Hero.

I had

I had been told of a manuscript in Benet-library: the inscription of it is *Itinerarium Fratris Simonis Simeonis et Hugonis Illuminatoris, 1322.* Would not one think this should promise something? They were two Franciscan friars that came from Ireland, and passed through Wales to London, to Canterbury, to Dover, and so to France in their way to Jerusalem. All that relates to our own country has been transcribed for me, and (sorry am I to say) signifies not a halfpenny: only this little bit might be inserted in your next edition of the Painters: *Ad aliud caput civitatis (Londoniæ) est monasterium nigrorum monachorum nomine Westmonasterium, in quo constanter et communiter omnes reges Angliæ sepeliuntur—et eidem monasterio quasi immediatè conjungitur illud famosissimum palatium regis, in quo est illa vulgata camera, in cujus parietibus sunt omnes historiæ bellicæ totius Bibliæ ineffabiliter depictæ, atque in Gallico completissimè et perfectissimè conscriptæ, in non modicâ intuentium admiratione et maximâ regali magnificentiâ.*

I have had certain observations on your Royal and Noble Authors given me to send you perhaps about three years ago: last week I found them in a drawer, and (my conscience being troubled) now enclose them to you. I have even forgot whose they are.

I have been also told of a passage in Ph. de Comines, which (if you know) ought not to have been passed over. The book is not at hand at present, and I must conclude my letter. Adieu!

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER IX.

Arlington-street, Friday night, February 26.

I PLAGUE you to death, but I must reply a few more words. I shall be very glad to see in print, and to have those that are worthy see your ancient odes; but I was in hopes there were some pieces too that I had not seen. I am sorry there are not.

I troubled you about Perkin's proclamation, because Mr. Hume lays great stress

stres upon it, and insists, that if Perkin affirmed his brother was killed, it must have been true, if he was true duke of York. Mr. Hume would have persuaded me that the proclamation is in Stowe, but I can find no such thing there; nor, what is more, in Casley's catalogue, which I have twice looked over carefully. I wrote to sir David Dalrymple in Scotland, to enquire after it, because I would produce it if I could, though it should make against me: but he, I believe, thinking I enquired with the contrary view, replied very drily, that it was published at York, and was not to be found in Scotland. Whether he is displeased that I have plucked a hair from the tresses of their great historian; or whether, as I suspect, he is offended for king William; this reply was all the notice he took of my letter and book. I only smiled, as I must do when I find one party is angry with me on king William's, and the other on lord Clarendon's account.

The answer advertised is Guthrie's, who is furious that I have taken no notice of *his* History. I shall take as little of his pamphlet; but his end will be answered, if he sells that and one or two copies of his History. Mr. Hume, I am told, has drawn up an answer too, which I shall see, and, if I can, will get him to publish; for, if I should ever choose to say any thing more on this subject, I had rather reply to him than to hackney-writers:—to the latter, indeed, I never will reply. A few notes I have to add that will be very material; and I wish to get some account of a book that was once sold at Osborn's, that exists perhaps at Cambridge, and of which I found a memorandum t'other day in my note-book. It is called A paradox, or apology for Richard III. by sir William Cornwallis. If you could discover it, I should be much obliged to you.

Lord Sandwich, with whom I have not exchanged a syllable since the general warrants, very obligingly sent me an account of the roll at Kimbolton; and has since, at my desire, borrowed it for me and sent it to town*. It is as long as my lord Lyttelton's History; but by what I can read of it (for it is both ill written and much decayed), it is not a roll of kings, but of all that have been possessed of, or been earls of Warwick: or have not—for one of the first earls is Æneas. How, or wherefore, I do not know, but amongst the first is Richard III. in whose reign it was finished, and with whom it

* From this roll were taken the two plates of portraits in the Historic Doubts, now first published in this edition. E.

concludes. He is there again with his wife and son, and Edward IV. and Clarence and his wife, and Edward their son (who unluckily is a little old man), and Margaret countess of Salisbury, their daughter——But why do I say with these? There is every body else too—and what is most meritorious, the habits of all the times are admirably well observed from the most savage ages. Each figure is tricked with a pen, well drawn, but neither coloured nor shaded. Richard is straight, but thinner than my print; his hair short, and exactly curled in the same manner; not so handsome as mine, but what one might really believe intended for the same countenance, as drawn by a different painter, especially when so small; for the figures in general are not so long as one's finger. His queen is ugly, and with just such a square forehead as in my print, but I cannot say like it. Nor, indeed, where forty-five figures out of fifty (I have not counted the number) must have been imaginary, can one lay great stress on the five. I shall, however, have these figures copied, especially as I know of no other image of the son. Mr. Astle is to come to me to-morrow morning to explain the writing.

I wish you had told me in what age your Franciscan friars lived; and what the passage in Comines is. I am very ready to make amende honorable.

Thank you for the notes on the Noble Authors. They shall be inserted when I make a new edition, for the sake of the trouble the person has taken, though they are of little consequence. Doddsley has asked me for a new edition; but I have little heart to undertake such work, no more than to mend my old linen. It is pity one cannot be born an ancient, and have commentators to do such jobs for one! Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Saturday morning.

ON reading over your letter again this morning, I do find the age in which the friars lived—I read and write in such a hurry, that I think I neither know what I read or say.

LETTER

LETTER X.

Pembroke-hall, March 6, 1768.

HERE is fir William Cornwallis, entitled *Effayes of certaine Paradoxes*.
2d Edit. 1617, Lond.

King Richard III.	}	praised.
The French Pockes		
Nothing		
Good to be in debt		
Sadneffe		
Julian the Apostate's vertues		

The title-page will probably suffice you; but if you would know any more of him, he has read nothing but the common chronicles, and those without attention: for example, speaking of Anne the queen, he says, she was *barren*, of which Richard had often complained to Rotheram. He extenuates the murder of Henry VI. and his son: the first, he says, might be a malicious accusation, for that many did suppose he died of mere melancholy and grief: the latter cannot be proved to be the action of Richard (though executed in his presence); and if it were, he did it out of love to his brother Edward. He justifies the death of the lords at Pomfret, from reasons of state, for his own preservation, the safety of the commonwealth, and the ancient nobility. The execution of Hastings he excuses from necessity, from the dishonesty and sensuality of the man: what was his crime with respect to Richard, he does not say. Dr. Shaw's sermon was not by the king's command, but to be imputed to the preacher's own ambition: but if it was by order, *to charge his mother with adultery was a matter of no such great moment, since it is no wonder in that sex*. Of the murder in the Tower he doubts; but if it were by his order, the offence was to God, not to his people; and *how could he demonstrate his love more amply, than to venture his soul for their quiet?* Have you enough, pray? You see it is an idle declamation, the exercise of a school-boy that is to be bred a statesman.

I have looked in Stowe: to be sure there is no proclamation there. Mr. Hume, I suppose, means *Speed*, where it is given, how truly I know not;

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but.

but that he had seen the original is sure, and seems to quote the very words of it in the beginning of that speech which Perkin makes to James IV. and also just afterwards, where he treats of the Cornish rebellion.

Guthrie, you see, has vented himself in the Critical Review. His History I never saw, nor is it here, nor do I know any one that ever saw it. He is a rascal, but rascals may chance to meet with curious records; and that commission to sir J. Tyrrell (if it be not a lye) is such: so is the order for Henry the sixth's funeral. I would by no means take notice of him, write what he would. I am glad you have seen the Manchester-roll.

It is not I that talk of Phil. de Comines; it was mentioned to me as a thing that looked like a voluntary omission: but I see you have taken notice of it in the note to page 71, though rather too slightly. You have not observed that the same writer says, c. 55, *Richard tua de sa main, ou fit tuer en sa presence, quelque lieu apart, ce bon homme le roi Henry*. Another oversight I think there is at p. 43, where you speak of the roll of *parliament* and the contract with lady Eleanor Boteler, as things newly come to light; whereas Speed has given at large the same roll in his History. Adieu!

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

L E T T E R S

FROM

THOMAS GRAY

TO

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

LETTERS

THOMAS GRAY

THE MON. HORACE WALPOLE

L E T T E R S

FROM

THOMAS GRAY

TO

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

LETTER I.

Cambridge, February 3, 1746.

DEAR SIR,

YOU are so good to enquire after my usual time of coming to town: it is at a season when even you, the perpetual friend of London, will, I fear, hardly be in it—the middle of June: and I commonly return hither in September; a month when I may more probably find you at home.

Our defeat to be sure is a rueful affair for the honour of the troops; but the Duke is gone it seems with the rapidity of a cannon-bullet to undefeat us again. The common people in town at least know how to be afraid: but we are such *uncommon* people here as to have no more sense of danger, than if the battle had been fought when and where the battle of Cannæ was. The perception of these calamities and of their consequences, that we are supposed to get from books, is so faintly impressed, that we talk of war, famine and pestilence with no more apprehension than of a broken head, or of a coach overturned between York and Edinburgh. I heard three people, sensible middle-aged men (when the Scotch were said to be at Stamford, and actually were at Derby), talking of hiring a chaise to go to Caxton (a place in the high road) to see the pretender and the highlanders as they passed.

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I can say no more for Mr. Pope (for what you keep in reserve may be worse than all the rest). It is natural to wish the finest writer, one of them, we ever had, should be an honest man. It is for the interest even of that virtue, whose friend he professed himself, and whose beauties he sung, that he should not be found a dirty animal. But however, this is Mr. Warburton's business, not mine, who may scribble his pen to the stumps and all in vain, if these facts are so. It is not from what he told me about himself that I thought well of him, but from a humanity and goodness of heart, aye, and greatness of mind, that runs through his private correspondence, not less apparent than are a thousand little vanities and weaknesses mixed with those good qualities, for nobody ever took him for a philosopher.

If you know any thing of Mr. Mann's state of health and happiness, or the motions of Mr. Chute homewards, it will be a particular favour to inform me of them, as I have not heard this half-year from them.

I am sincerely yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER II.

January, 1747.

IT is doubtless an encouragement to continue writing to you, when you tell me you answer me with pleasure: I have another reason which would make me very copious, had I any thing to say; it is, that I write to you with equal pleasure, though not with equal spirits, nor with like plenty of materials: please to subtract then so much for spirit, and so much for matter; and you will find me, I hope, neither so slow, nor so short, as I might otherwise seem. Besides, I had a mind to send you the remainder of Agrippina, that was lost in a wilderness of papers. Certainly you do her too much honour: she seemed to me to talk like an *Oldboy*, all in figures and mere poetry, instead of nature and the language of real passion. Do you remember *Approchez-vous, Neron*?—Who would not rather have thought of that half line than all Mr. Rowe's flowers of eloquence? However, you will find the remainder here at the end in an outrageous long speech: it was begun above four years ago (it is a misfortune you know my age, else I

¹ Agrippina, in Racine's tragedy of Britannicus.

might have added), when I was very young. Poor West put a stop to that tragic torrent he saw breaking in upon him:—have a care, I warn you, not to set open the flood-gate again, lest it drown you and me and the bishop and all.

I am very sorry to hear you treat philosophy and her followers like a parcel of monks and hermits, and think myself obliged to vindicate a profession I honour, *bien que je n'en tiennne pas boutique* (as mad. Sevigné says). The first man that ever bore the name, if you remember, used to say, that life was like the Olympic games (the greatest public assembly of his age and country), where some came to show their strength and agility of body, as the champions; others, as the musicians, orators, poets and historians, to show their excellence in those arts; the traders, to get money; and the better sort, to enjoy the spectacle, and judge of all these. They did not then run away from society for fear of its temptations: they passed their days in the midst of it: conversation was their business: they cultivated the arts of persuasion, on purpose to show men it was their interest, as well as their duty, not to be foolish, and false, and unjust; and that too in many instances with success: which is not very strange; for they showed by their life that their lessons were not impracticable; and that pleasures were no temptations, but to such as wanted a clear perception of the pains annexed to them¹. But I have done preaching à la Grecque. Mr. Ratcliffe² made a shift to behave very rationally without their instructions, at a season which they took a great deal of pains to fortify themselves and others against: one would not desire to lose one's head with a better grace. I am particularly satisfied with the humanity of that last embrace to all the people about him. Sure it must be somewhat embarrassing to die before so much good company!

You need not fear but posterity will be ever glad to know the absurdity of their ancestors: the foolish will be glad to know they were as foolish as they, and the wise will be glad to find themselves wiser. You will please all the world then; and if you recount miracles you will be believed so

¹ Never perhaps was a more admirable picture drawn of *true* philosophy and its real and important services; services not confined to the speculative opinions of the studios, but adapted to the common purposes of life, and promoting the general happiness of mankind; not upon the

chimerical basis of a system, but on the immutable foundations of truth and virtue. E.

² Brother to the earl of Derwentwater. He was executed at Tyburn, December 1746, for having been concerned in the rebellion in Scotland. E.

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much the sooner. We are pleased when we wonder ; and we believe because we are pleased. Folly and wisdom, and wonder and pleasure, join with me in desiring you would continue to entertain them : refuse us, if you can. Adieu, dear sir !

T. GRAY.

LETTER III.

Stoke, June 12, 1750.

DEAR SIR,

AS I live in a place, where even the ordinary tattle of the town arrives not till it is stale, and which produces no events of its own, you will not desire any excuse from me for writing so seldom, especially as of all people living I know you are the least a friend to letters spun out of one's own brains, with all the toil and constraint that accompanies sentimental productions. I have been here at Stoke a few days (where I shall continue good part of the summer) ; and having put an end to a thing, whose beginning you have seen long ago, I immediately send it you¹. You will, I hope, look upon it in the light of a *thing with an end to it* ; a merit that most of my writings have wanted, and are like to want, but which this epistle I am determined shall not want, when it tells you that I am ever

Yours,

T. GRAY.

Not that I have done yet ; but who could avoid the temptation of finishing so roundly and so cleverly in the manner of good queen Anne's days ? Now I have talked of writings ; I have seen a book, which is by this time in the press, against Middleton (though without naming him), by Asheton. As far as I can judge from a very hasty reading, there are things in it new and ingenious, but rather too prolix, and the style here and there favouring too strongly of sermon. I imagine it will do him credit. So much for other people, now to *self* again. You are desired to tell me your opinion, if you can take the pains, of these lines. I am once more

Ever yours.

¹ This was the Elegy in the church-yard.

LETTER IV.

Ash-Wednesday, Cambridge, 1751.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOU have indeed conducted with great decency my little *misfortune*: you have taken a paternal care of it, and expressed much more kindness than could have been expected from so near a relation. But we are all frail; and I hope to do as much for you another time. Nurse Doddsley has given it a pinch or two in the cradle, that (I doubt) it will bear the marks of as long as it lives. But no matter: we have ourselves suffered under her hands before now; and besides, it will only look the more careless, and by *accident* as it were. I thank you for your advertisement, which saves my honour, and in a manner *bien flatteuse pour moi*, who should be put to it even to make myself a compliment in good English.

You will take me for a mere poet, and a fetcher and carrier of singsong, if I tell you that I intend to send you the beginning of a drama¹, not mine, thank God, as you'll believe, when you hear it is finished, but wrote by a person whom I have a very good opinion of. It is (unfortunately) in the manner of the ancient drama, with choruses, which I am, to my shame, the occasion of; for, as great part of it was at first written in that form, I would not suffer him to change it to a play fit for the stage, as he intended, because the lyric parts are the best of it, and they must have been lost. The story is Saxon, and the language has a tang of Shakespear, that suits an old-fashioned fable very well. In short, I don't do it merely to amuse you, but for the sake of the author, who wants a judge, and so I would lend him *mine*: yet not without your leave, lest you should have us up to dirty our stockings at the bar of your house for wasting the time and politics of the *nation*. Adieu, sir!

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER V.

Cambridge, March 3, 1751.

ELFRIDA (for that is the fair one's name) and her author are now in town together. He has promised me, that he will send a part of it to you

¹ This was the Elfrida of Mr. Mason.

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some morning while he is there ; and (if you shall think it worth while to descend to particulars) I should be glad you would tell me very freely your opinion about it ; for he shall know nothing of the matter, that is not fit for the ears of a *tender* parent—though, by the way, he has ingenuity and merit enough (whatever his drama may have) to bear hearing his faults very patiently. I must only beg you not to show it, much less let it be copied ; for it will be published, though not as yet.

I do not expect any more editions¹, as I have appeared in more magazines than one. The chief errata were *sacred* bower for *secret* ; *hidden* for *kindred* (in spite of dukes and clafficks) ; and *frowning* as in scorn for *smiling*. I humbly propose, for the benefit of Mr. Doddsley and his matrons, that take *awake* for a verb, that they should read *asleep*, and all will be right². Gil Blas is the Lying Valet in five acts. The fine lady has half-a-dozen good lines dispersed in it. Pompey is the hasty production of a Mr. Coventry (cousin to him you knew), a young clergyman : I found it out by three characters, which once made part of a comedy that he showed me of his own writing. Has that miracle of *tenderness and sensibility* (as she calls it) lady Vane given you any amusement ? Peregrine, whom she uses as a vehicle, is very poor indeed with a few exceptions. In the last volume is a character of Mr. Lyttelton, under the name of Gosling Scrag, and a parody of part of his Monody, under the notion of a pastoral on the death of his grandmother.

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER VI.

Nov. Tuesday, Cambridge.

IT is a misfortune to me to be at a distance from both of you at present. A letter can give one so little idea of such matters ! * * * * I always believed well of his heart and temper, and would gladly do so still. If they are as they should be, I should have expected every thing from such an ex-

¹ Of the Elegy in the church-yard.

² The verse to which he alludes is this :

“ Ev’n from the tomb the voice of nature cries ;

“ Ev’n in our ashes live their wonted fires.”

The last line of which he had at first written thus :

“ Awake and faithful to her wonted fires.” E.

planation ;

planation; for it is a tenet with me (a simple one, you'll perhaps say), that if ever two people, who love one another, come to breaking, it is for want of a timely eclairecissement, a full and precise one, without witnesses or mediators, and without reserving any one disagreeable circumstance for the mind to brood upon in silence.

I am not totally of your mind as to Mr. Lyttelton's Elegy, though I love kids and fawns as little as you do. If it were all like the fourth stanza, I should be excessively pleased. Nature and sorrow, and tenderness, are the true genius of such things; and something of these I find in several parts of it (not in the orange-tree): poetical ornaments are foreign to the purpose, for they only show a man is not sorry;—and devotion worse; for it teaches him, that he ought not to be sorry, which is all the pleasure of the thing. I beg leave to turn your weathercock the contrary way. Your Epistle¹ I have not seen a great while, and doctor M. is not in the way to give me a sight of it: but I remember enough to be sure all the world will be pleased with it, even with all its *faults upon its head*, if you don't care to mend them. I would try to do it myself (however hazardous), rather than it should remain unpublished. As to my Eton Ode, Mr. Doddsley is *padrone*². The second³ you had, I suppose you do not think worth giving him: otherwise, to me it seems not worse than the former. He might have Selima⁴ too, unless she be of too little importance for his patriot-collection; or perhaps the *connections* you had with her may interfere. *Che so io?* Adieu!

I am yours ever,

T. G.

LETTER VII.

Cambridge, Dec. Monday.

THIS comes du fond de ma cellule to salute Mr. H. W. not so much him that visits and votes, and goes to White's and to court; as the H. W.

¹ From Florence to Thomas Asheton.

³ The Ode to Spring.

² To publish in his collection of poems.

⁴ The Ode on Mr. Walpole's cat drowned in the tub of gold-fish.

in

in his rural capacity, snug in his tub on Windsor-hill, and brooding over folios of his own creation: him that can slip away, like a pregnant beauty (but a little oftener), into the country, be brought to bed perhaps of twins, and whisk to town again the week after with a face as if nothing had happened. Among all the little folks, my godsons and daughters, I can not choose but enquire more particularly after the health of one; I mean (without a figure) the *Memoires*¹: Do they grow? Do they unite, and hold up their heads, and dress themselves? Do they begin to think of making their appearance in the world, that is to say, fifty years hence, to make posterity stare, and all good people cross themselves? Has Asheton (who will be then lord bishop of Killaloe, and is to publish them) thought of an *aviso al lettore* to prefix to them yet, importing, that if the words church, king, religion, ministry, &c. be found often repeated in this book, they are not to be taken literally, but poetically, and as may be most strictly reconcileable to the faith then established;—that he knew the author well when he was a young man; and can testify upon the honour of his function, that he said his prayers regularly and devoutly, had a profound reverence for the clergy, and firmly believed every thing that was the fashion in those days?

When you have done impeaching my lord Lovat, I hope to hear *de vos nouvelles*, and moreover, whether you have got colonel Conway yet? Whether sir C. Williams is to go to Berlin? What sort of a prince Mitridate may be?—and whatever other tidings you choose to refresh an anchoret with. *Frattanto* I send you a scene in a tragedy²: if it don't make you cry, it will make you laugh; and so it moves some passion, that I take to be enough. Adieu, dear sir! I am

Sincerely yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER VIII.

Cambridge, October 8, 1751.

I SEND you this³ (as you desire) merely to make up half-a-dozen; though it will hardly answer your end in furnishing out either a head or

¹ *Memoires* of his own time, which Mr. Walpole was then writing.

² The first scene in Mr. Gray's unfinished

tragedy of Agrippina, published in Mr. Mason's edition of his works.

³ The Hymn to Adversity.

tail-piece. But your own fable¹ may much better supply the place. You have altered it to its advantage ; but there is still something a little embarrassed here and there in the expression. I rejoice to find you apply (pardon the use of so odious a word) to the history of your own times. Speak, and spare not. Be as impartial as you can ; and after all, the world will not believe you are so, though you should make as many protestations as bishop Burnet. They will feel in their own breast, and find it very possible to hate fourscore persons, yea, ninety and nine : so you must rest satisfied with the testimony of your own conscience. Somebody has laughed at Mr. Doddsley, or at me, when they talked of the *bat* : I have nothing more, either nocturnal or diurnal, to deck his miscellany with. We have a man here that writes a good hand ; but he has little failings that hinder my recommending him to you². He is lousy, and he is mad : he sets out this week for Bedlam ; but if you insist upon it, I don't doubt he will pay his respects to you. I have seen two of Dr. Middleton's unpublished works. One is about 44 pages in 4to against Dr. Waterland, who wrote a very orthodox book on the Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity, and insisted, that christians ought to have no communion with such as differ from them in fundamentals. Middleton enters no farther into the doctrine itself than to show that a mere speculative point can never be called a fundamental ; and that the earlier fathers, on whose concurrent tradition Waterland would build, are so far, when they speak of the three persons, from agreeing with the present notion of our church, that they declare for the inferiority of the son, and seem to have no clear and distinct idea of the holy ghost at all. The rest is employed in exposing the folly and cruelty of stiffness and zealotism in religion, and in showing that the primitive ages of the church, in which tradition had its rise, were (even by confession of the best scholars and most orthodox writers) the *æra of nonsense and absurdity*. It is finished, and very well wrote ; but has been mostly incorporated into his other works, particularly the Enquiry : and for this reason I suppose he has writ upon it, *This wholly laid aside*. The second is in Latin, on Miracles ; to show, that of the two methods of defending christianity, one from its intrinsic evidence, the holiness and purity of its doctrines, the other from its external, the miracles said to be wrought to confirm it ; the first has been little attended to by reason of its difficulty ; the second much insisted upon, because it appeared an easier task ; but that it can in reality prove nothing at all. "Nobilis illa

¹ The Entail.² As an amanuensis.

quidem defenfio (the first) quam si obtinere potuissent, rem simul omnem expediisse, causamque penitus vicisse viderentur. At causæ hujus defendendæ labor cum tantâ argumentandi cavillandique molestiâ conjunctus ad alteram, quam dixi, defensionis viam, ut commodiorem longè et faciliorem, plerosque adegit—ego verò istiusmodi defensione religionem nostram non modo non confirmari, sed dubiam potius suspectamque reddi existimo.” He then proceeds to consider miracles in general, and afterwards those of the Pagans, compared with those of Christ. I only tell you the plan, for I have not read it out (though it is short); but you will not doubt to what conclusion it tends. There is another thing, I know not what, I am to see. As to the Treatise on Prayer; they say it is burnt indeed. Adieu!

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER IX.

YOUR pen was too rapid to mind the common form of a direction, and so, by omitting the words *near Windsor*, your letter has been diverting itself at another Stoke near Ailesbury, and came not to my hands till to-day. The true original chairs were all sold, when the Huntingdons broke; there are nothing now but Halsey-chairs, not adapted to the squareness of a Gothic dowager's ramp. And by the way I do not see how the uneasiness and uncomfortableness of a coronation-chair can be any objection with you: every chair that is easy is modern, and unknown to our ancestors. As I remember, there were certain low chairs, that looked like ebony, at Esher, and were old and pretty. Why should not Mr. Bentley improve upon them?—I do not wonder at Doddsley. You have talked to him of six *odes*, for so you are pleased to call every thing I write, though it be but a receipt to make apple-dumplings. He has reason to gulp when he finds one of them only a long story. I don't know but I may send him very soon (by your hands) an ode to his own tooth, a high Pindarick upon stilts, which one must be a better scholar than he is to understand a line of, and the very best scholars will understand but a little matter here and there. It wants but seventeen lines of having an end, I don't say of being finished. As it is so unfortunate to come too late for Mr. Bentley, it may appear in the fourth volume of the Miscellanies, provided you don't think it execrable, and sup-

press it. Pray, when the fine book is to be printed¹, let me revise the press, for you know you can't; and there are a few trifles I could wish altered.

I know not what you mean by hours of love, and cherries, and pine-apples. I neither see nor hear any thing here, and am of opinion that is the best way. My compliments to Mr. Bentley, if he be with you.

I am yours ever,

T. GRAY.

I desire you would not show that epigram I repeated to you², as mine. I have heard of it twice already as coming from you.

LETTER X.

I AM obliged to you for Mr. Doddsley's book³, and, having pretty well looked it over, will (as you desire) tell you my opinion of it. He might, methinks, have spared the Graces in his frontispiece, if he chose to be æconomical, and dressed his authors in a little more decent raiment—not in whited-brown paper and distorted characters, like an old ballad. I am ashamed to see myself; but the company keeps me in countenance: so to begin with Mr. Tickell. This is not only a state-poem (my ancient aversion), but a state-poem on the peace of Utrecht. If Mr. Pope had wrote a panegyric on it, one could hardly have read him with patience: but this is only a poor short-winded imitator of Addison, who had himself not above three or four notes in poetry, sweet enough indeed, like those of a German flute, but such as soon tire and satiate the ear with their frequent return. Tickell has added to this a great poverty of sense, and a string of transitions that hardly become a school-boy. However, I forgive him for the sake of his ballad⁴, which I always thought the prettiest in the world. All there is of M. Green here has been printed before: there is a profusion of wit every where; reading would have formed his judgment, and harmonized

¹ The edition of his Odes printed at Strawberry-hill. the epigram alluded to. E.

² His collection of Poems.

³ The Editor much wishes he could repeat it to the public, but has not been able to discover

⁴ Colin and Lucy; beginning

"Of Leinster fam'd for maidens fair."

his verse, for even his wood-notes often break out into strains of real poetry and music. The School-mistress is excellent in its kind, and masterly; and (I am sorry to differ from you, but) London is to me one of those few imitations, that have all the ease and all the spirit of an original. The same man's¹ verses at the opening of Garrick's theatre are far from bad. Mr. Dyer (here you will despise me highly) has more of poetry in his imagination, than almost any of our number; but rough and injudicious. I should range Mr. Bramston only a step or two above Dr. King, who is as low in my estimation as in yours. Dr. Evans is a furious madman; and Pre-existence is nonsense in all her altitudes. Mr. Lyttelton is a gentle elegiac person: Mr. Nugent² sure did not write his own ode³. I like Mr. Whitehead's little poems, I mean the Ode on a tent, the Verses to Garrick, and particularly those to Charles Townshend, better than any thing I had seen before of him. I gladly pass over H. Brown, and the rest, to come at you. You know I was of the publishing side, and thought your reasons against it none; for though, as Mr. Chute said extremely well, the *still small voice* of Poetry was not made to be heard in a crowd; yet Satire will be heard, for all the audience are by nature her friends; especially when she appears in the spirit of Dryden, with his strength, and often with his versification; such as you have caught in those lines on the royal unction, on the papal dominion, and convents of both sexes, on Henry VIII. and Charles II. for these are to me the shining parts of your Epistle⁴. There are many lines I could wish corrected, and some blotted out, but beauties enough to atone for a thousand worse faults than these. The opinion of such as can at all judge, who saw it before in Dr. Middleton's hands, concurs nearly with mine. As to what any one says, since it came out; our people (you must know) are slow of judgement: they wait till some bold body saves them the trouble, and then follow his opinion; or stay till they hear what is said in town, that is, at some bishop's table, or some coffee-house about the Temple. When they are determined, I will tell you faithfully their verdict. As for the Beauties⁵, I am their most humble servant. What shall I say to Mr. Lowth, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Rolle, the reverend Mr. Brown, Seward, &c.? If I say, Messieurs! this is not the thing; write prose, write sermons, write nothing at all; they will disdain me, and my advice. What then would

¹ Doctor Samuel Johnson.

² Afterwards earl Nugent.

³ That addressed to Mr. Pulteney.

⁴ Epistle from Florence to Thomas Asheton, tutor to the earl of Plymouth.

⁵ The epistle to Mr. Eckardt the painter.

the sickly peer¹ have done, that spends so much time in admiring every thing that has four legs, and fretting at his own misfortune in having but two; and cursing his own politic head and feeble constitution, that won't let him be such a beast as he would wish? Mr. S. Jenyns now and then can write a good line or two—such as these—

Snatch us from all our little sorrows here,
Calm every grief, and dry each childish tear, &c.

I like Mr. Aston Hervey's fable; and an ode (the last of all) by Mr. Mason, a new acquaintance of mine, whose Musæus too seems to carry with it the promise at least of something good to come. I was glad to see you distinguished who poor West was, before his charming ode², and called it any thing rather than a Pindaric. The town is an owl, if it don't like lady Mary³, and I am surpris'd at it: we here are owls enough to think her eclogues very bad; but that I did not wonder at. Our present taste is fir T. Fitz-Osborne's Letters. I send you a bit of a thing for two reasons: first, because it is of one of your favourites, Mr. M. Green; and next, because I would do justice. The thought on which my second ode⁴ turns is manifestly stole from hence:—not that I knew it at the time, but, having seen this many years before, to be sure it imprinted itself on my memory, and, forgetting the author, I took it for my own. The subject was the Queen's Hermitage.

* * * * *

Though yet no palace grace the shore
To lodge the pair you⁵ should adore;
Nor abbeyes great in ruins rise,
Royal equivalents for vice:
Behold a grot in Delphic grove
The Graces and the Muses love,
A temple from vain-glory free;
Whose goddess is Philosophy;
Whose fides such licens'd idols⁶ crown,
As Superstition would pull down;

¹ Lord Hervey.

² Monody on the death of queen Caroline.

³ Lady Mary W. Montagu's Poems.

⁴ The Ode to Spring.

⁵ Speaking to the Thames.

⁶ The four busts.

The only pilgrimage I know,
 That men of sense would choose to go.
 Which sweet abode, her wisest choice,
 Urania cheers with heavenly voice :
 While all the Virtues gather round
 To see her consecrate the ground.

If thou, the god with winged feet,
 In council talk of this retreat ;
 And jealous gods resentment show
 At altars rais'd to men below :
 Tell those proud lords of heaven, 'tis fit
 Their house our heroes should admit.
 While each exists (as poets sing)
 A lazy, lewd, immortal, thing ;
 They must, or grow in disrepute,
 With earth's first commoners recruit.

Needless it is in terms unskill'd
 To praise, whatever Boyle shall build.
 Needless it is the busts to name
 Of men, monopolists of fame ;
 Four chiefs adorn the modest stone
 For virtue, as for learning, known.
 The thinking sculpture helps to raise
 Deep thoughts, the genii of the place :
 To the mind's ear, and inward sight,
 There silence speaks, and shade gives light :
 While insects from the threshold preach,
 And minds dispos'd to musing teach ;
 Proud of strong limbs and painted hues,
 They perish by the slightest bruise,
 Or maladies begun within
 Destroy more slow life's frail machine :
 From maggot-youth thro' change of state
 They feel like us the turns of fate :
 Some born to creep have lived to fly,
 And changed earth's cells for dwellings high :

And

And some, that did their fix wings keep,
Before they died, been forced to creep.
They politics, like ours, profess:
The greater prey upon the less.
Some strain on foot huge loads to bring,
Some toil incessant on the wing:
Nor from their vigorous schemes desist
Till death; and then are never mist.
Some frolick, toil, marry, increase,
Are sick and well, have war and peace,
And broke with age in half a day
Yield to successors, and away.

* * * *

Adieu! I am yours ever,

T. GRAY.

LETTER XI.

Stoke, July 11, 1757.

I WILL not give you the trouble of sending your chaise for me. I intend to be with you on Wednesday in the evening. If the press stands still all this time for me, to be sure it is dead in child-bed.

I do not love notes, though you see I had resolved to put two or three¹. They are signs of weakness and obscurity. If a thing cannot be understood without them, it had better be not understood at all. If you will be vulgar, and pronounce it *Lunnun*, instead of London², I can't help it. Caradoc I have private reasons against; and besides it is in reality Caradoc, and will not stand in the verse.

I rejoice you can fill all your *vuides*: the Maintenon could not, and that was her great misfortune. Seriously though, I congratulate you on your

¹ To the Bard.

² "Ye tow'rs of Julius! London's lasting shame." Bard, verse 87.

happiness,

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happiness, and seem to understand it. The receipt is obvious: it is only, Have something to do; but how few can apply it!—Adieu!

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER XII.

I AM so charmed with the two specimens of Erse poetry, that I cannot help giving you the trouble to enquire a little farther about them, and should wish to see a few lines of the original, that I may form some flight idea of the language, the measures, and the rhythm.

Is there any thing known of the author or authors, and of what antiquity are they supposed to be?

Is there any more to be had of equal beauty, or at all approaching to it?

I have been often told that the poem called Hardicnute (which I always admired, and still admire) was the work of somebody that lived a few years ago¹. This I do not at all believe, though it has evidently been retouched in places by some modern hand: but, however, I am authorised by this report to ask, whether the two poems in question are certainly antique and genuine. I make this enquiry in quality of an antiquary, and am not otherwise concerned about it: for, if I were sure that any one now living in Scotland had written them to divert himself and laugh at the credulity of the world, I would undertake a journey into the Highlands only for the pleasure of seeing him.

¹ It has been supposed the work of a lady of the name of Wardlaw, who died in Scotland not many years ago, but upon no better evidence, than that I could ever learn, than that a copy of the poem with some erasures was found among her papers after her death.—No proof surely of its original composition, as few but persons of business, which women seldom are, take the precaution of docketing, or writing "Copy" upon every thing they may transcribe. E.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

I HAVE been very ill this week with a great cold and a fever, and though now in a way to be well, am like to be confined some days longer: whatever you will send me that is new, or old, and *long*, will be received as a charity. Rousseau's people do not interest me; there is but one character and one style in them all, I do not know their faces asunder. I have no esteem for their persons or conduct, am not touched with their passions; and as to their story, I do not believe a word of it—not because it is improbable, but because it is absurd. If I had any little propensity, it was to Julie; but now she has gone and (so hand over head) married that monsieur de Wolmar, I take her for a *vraie Suisse*, and do not doubt but she had taken a cup too much, like her lover¹. All this does not imply that I will not read it out, when you can spare the rest of it.

LETTER XIV.

Sunday, February 28, 1762.

I RETURN you my best thanks for the copy of your book², which you sent me, and have not at all lessened my opinion of it since I read it in print, though the press has in general a bad effect on the completion of one's works. The engravings look, as you say, better than I had expected, yet not altogether so well as I could wish. I rejoice in the good dispositions of our court, and in the propriety of their application to you: the work is a thing so much to be wished; has so near a connection with the turn of your studies and of your curiosity; and might find such ample materials among your hoards and in your head; that it will be a sin if you let it drop.

¹ Were not the public already in possession of Mr. Gray's opinion of the *Nouvelle Heloise*, in his letters published by Mr. Mason—how would such a criticism, from such a critic, astonish all those more happily constituted readers, who, capable of appreciating varied excellence, have perhaps read with equal delight the exquisite odes of the one author, and the extraordinary and (with all its faults) inimitable romance of the other! E.

² The Anecdotes of Painting.

and

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and come to nothing, or worse than nothing, for want of your assistance¹. The historical part should be in the manner of Henault, a mere abridgement²; a series of facts selected with judgment, that may serve as a clue to lead

¹ See a note from lord Bute in the Letters to and from Ministers, inviting Mr. Walpole to turn his thoughts to a work of this kind; and Mr. Walpole's answer, offering to point out and collect materials, and take any trouble in aiding, supervising and directing the whole plan. E.

² This method Mr. Walpole had already adopted before he received his friend's letter; for a large memorandum-book of his is extant, with this title-page:

COLLECTIONS
FOR
A HISTORY
OF
THE MANNERS, CUSTOMS, HABITS, FASHIONS, CEREMONIES &c. &c. &c.
OF
ENGLAND,
BEGUN
FEBRUARY 21, 1762,
BY
MR. HORACE WALPOLE.

Col tempo, Tutto.

The heads of the subjects he meant to treat are there arranged alphabetically, and several pages of blank paper left between each, intended to have been filled up with matter relative to the objects in question, as it occurred to him.—We have only to regret, that though a number of curious scattered notes remain among lord Orford's papers, evidently intended for this work, its farther arrangement was never pursued; as in the hands of an antiquary, diligent, accurate and lively, as Mr. Walpole, it must have proved a most entertaining as well as a curious work.

The notes, or heads of chapters, in his memorandum-book, are as follows:

<i>Coats of Arms.</i>	When first used.
<i>Arms and Armour.</i>	Battle Axes. Coats of Mail. Habergeons. Hauberks. Shields, their forms.
<i>Armies.</i>	How raised and paid, and fleets. Admiral of western coast. My seal of R. Clitherol.

lead the mind along in the midst of those ruins and scattered monuments of art, that time has spared. This would be sufficient, and better than Mont-faucon's

- Books.* What books were in libraries before printing. Pay of copyists. Vide catalogue of books at Canterbury at end of Dart.
- Buildings.* Brick only for chimneys. No glass. Sudley castle glazed with beryl. Old London of chestnut. Licenses for embattling.
- Burials.* Soul-shot. Paid at interments. Vide Spelman's Posthuma.
- Coaches.* When first used. Saddles. Anne of Bohemia. First side-saddles. Chairs. Litter. Chariot. Vide Life of De Critz.
- Coins.* Easterlings. Copper tokens.
- Crusadoes.*
- Customs.* What, Saxons, Normans, Poitevins, &c. introduced. Curfeu.
- Deer.* When brought into England.
- Domain.* To enquire what the domain of the crown at different periods.
- Embassadors.* What their pay and privileges.
- Exchequer.* Vide Madox.
- Fashions.* See account of Harrison prefixed to Hollingshed's Chronicle. Wimples. Crisping pins. Love-locks. Colours of their mistresses. Piked horns.
- Fools.* Vide Anecdotes of Painting, in Holbein. Henry VIIIth's fool, a print of him.
- Forests.* Statutes of. New Forest. Inquiry how many in the crown. Manner of hunting. Picture at Wroxton of prince Henry and lord Harrington in hunting-habits. Chevy Chase, how founded.
- Games.* May games. At Cards. Tables. Dice. Numbers of small dice found under floor of Inner-Temple-hall.
- Haivering in the Bower.* When built. Jointure-house of what queens. When destroyed.
- Habits.* See Peck's account of them. Figures in Speed's maps. When first wigs. Tom Derry. Lord Holland. Account of fashions in Harrison's treatise before Hollingshed's Chronicle. Hollar's habits. Coats and waistcoats. Vide MS. of lord Sandwich.
- Heralds.*
- Holidays.* Keeping Christmas. Grands jours.
- Hops.* When first planted. See Fuller.
- Hours.* See my Green Book.
- Kings.* Often crowned.
- Knights.* How made. Ceremonies at creation of knights of Bath. See the plate in Dugdale's Warwickshire. Knights service. Knights fees.
- The Marehes.* Account of them in lord Monmouth's Memoires.
- Masks and Masking.* When brought in.
- Mumming.*
- Mathematics.* Roger Bacon.
- Marriage.* What the ceremonies attending it.
- Meals.* See bills of fare of Henry IV. in bishop Lyttelton's book and in Dugdale.
- New Year's Gifts.*
- Night Caps.* Embroidered with black. My head of Henry duke of Richmond. Oliver Cromwell's in Mrs. Kennon's sale.

402 LETTERS FROM THOMAS GRAY

faucou's more diffuse narrative. Such a work (I have heard) Mr. Burke is now employed about, which though not intended for this purpose might be

Ordeal.

Pleby.

Parks.

Poets Laureate.

Provisions.

Portraits.

Trials.

When built. Thomas duke of Gloucester apprehended there. When demolished.

King's proveditors. Forestalling of markets.

Busts of Henry I. and queen, at the west end of the cathedral of Rochester. Catherine of Valois queen of Henry V. in the long gallery at Lambeth, and archbishop Chichele. Among Harleian MSS. No. 1498-2. Henry VII. receiving a book from Ilip. Item, No. 1499-3. 1766-3. Lydgate. 1892-26. 2278-3. Henry VI. when a child. Ib. 4, 5, 6. No. 2358-14-15. No. 4826. Lydgate. No. 1319. No. 1349-3. Edward III. and all his children. Mr. Onflow, Black Prince, and another of sons of Edward III. My miniature of Henry duke of Richmond, son of Henry VIII. Portrait of Richard de Gainsborough, mason, in second volume of Lethcullier's Hist. Henry VI. and house of parliament engraven by Pyne. Edward IV. &c. before Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors. Jane Shore, at Eton.

Ruff.

Seals.

Stage.

Tenures.

Tombs.

Tournaments.

Tapestries.

Vineyards.

Wards.

Wills.

When first used. Succeeded by falling band.

Often cut on reverses of cameos and intaglios. Often good at the same period that our coins bad.

Mysteries. Farcies. Pantomimes. Morrice-dancers. Interludes. Pageants.

Vide Blount's Jocular Tenures. Peerages annexed to castles and lands. Arundel and Berkeley castles.

Their fashions in different ages. When statues on them first. When brasses. Roman columns about time of queen Elizabeth. Knights Templars cross-legged.

At Bayeux. In a room near the house of commons, with crusade of Richard I.

Several houses anciently called the Vineyard and the Vine. Mr. Chute's in Hampshire. Mr. Talbot's, near Dorking. The Vineyard in St. James's park, qu. how old? Vide Barnaby's Journal.

Court of wards and liveries.

Legacies. How many witnesses. When they could not write, made the sign of the cross. Bequeathing their clothes, beds, &c. &c. Cups and covers, their plate.

Then follows the subsequent list of authors to be consulted :

Madox's History of the Exche-

quer.

Dugdale.

Spelman.

Hearne.

Skinner.

Peck's Desiderata Curiosa.

Fuller's Worthies.

Hollingshed.

Hall.

Camden.

Froissart.

Fleetwood's Chronicum Pre-

tiosum.

Statutes at large.

Fynes Moryson.

Blount's Jocular Tenures.

Speed and Stowe.

Search rolls for patents of ma-

nufactories and monopolies.

applied

applied perhaps to this use. Then at the end of each reign should come a dissertation explanatory of the plates, and pointing out the turn of thought, the customs, ceremonials, arms, dresses, luxury, and private life, with the improvement or decline of the arts during that period. This you must do yourself, beside taking upon you the superintendence, direction, and choice of materials. As to the expence, that must be the king's own entirely, and he must give the book to foreign ministers and people of note; for it is obvious no private man can undertake such a thing without a subscription, and no gentleman will care for such an expedient; and a gentleman it should be, because he must have easy access to archives, cabinets, and collections of all sorts. I protest I do not think it impossible but they may give into such a scheme: they approve the design, they wish to encourage the arts and to be magnificent, and they have no Versailles or Herculaneum.

I hope to see you toward the end of March. If you bestow a line on me, pray tell me whether the baronne de la Peyriere is gone to her castle of Viry; and whether Fingal be discovered or shrewdly suspected to be a forgery. Adieu!

I am yours ever,

T. GRAY.

LETTER XV.

Sunday, December 30, 1764.

I HAVE received the Castle of Otranto, and return you my thanks for it. It engages our attention here^x, makes some of us cry a little, and all in general afraid to go to bed o' nights. We take it for a translation, and should believe it to be a true story, if it were not for St. Nicholas.

When your pen was in your hand you might have been a little more communicative: for, though disposed enough to believe the opposition rather consumptive, I am entirely ignorant of all the symptoms. Your canonical book I have been reading with great satisfaction. He speaketh as one having authority. If Englishmen have any feeling left, methinks

^x At Cambridge.

they must feel now; and if the ministry have any feeling (whom nobody will suspect of insensibility) they must cut off the author's ears, for it is in all the forms a most wicked libel. Is the old man and the lawyer put on, or is it real? or has some real lawyer furnished a good part of the materials, and another person employed them? This I guess; for there is an uncouthness of diction in the beginning, which is not supported throughout—though it now and then occurs again, as if the writer was weary of supporting the character he had assumed, when the subject had warmed him beyond dissimulation.

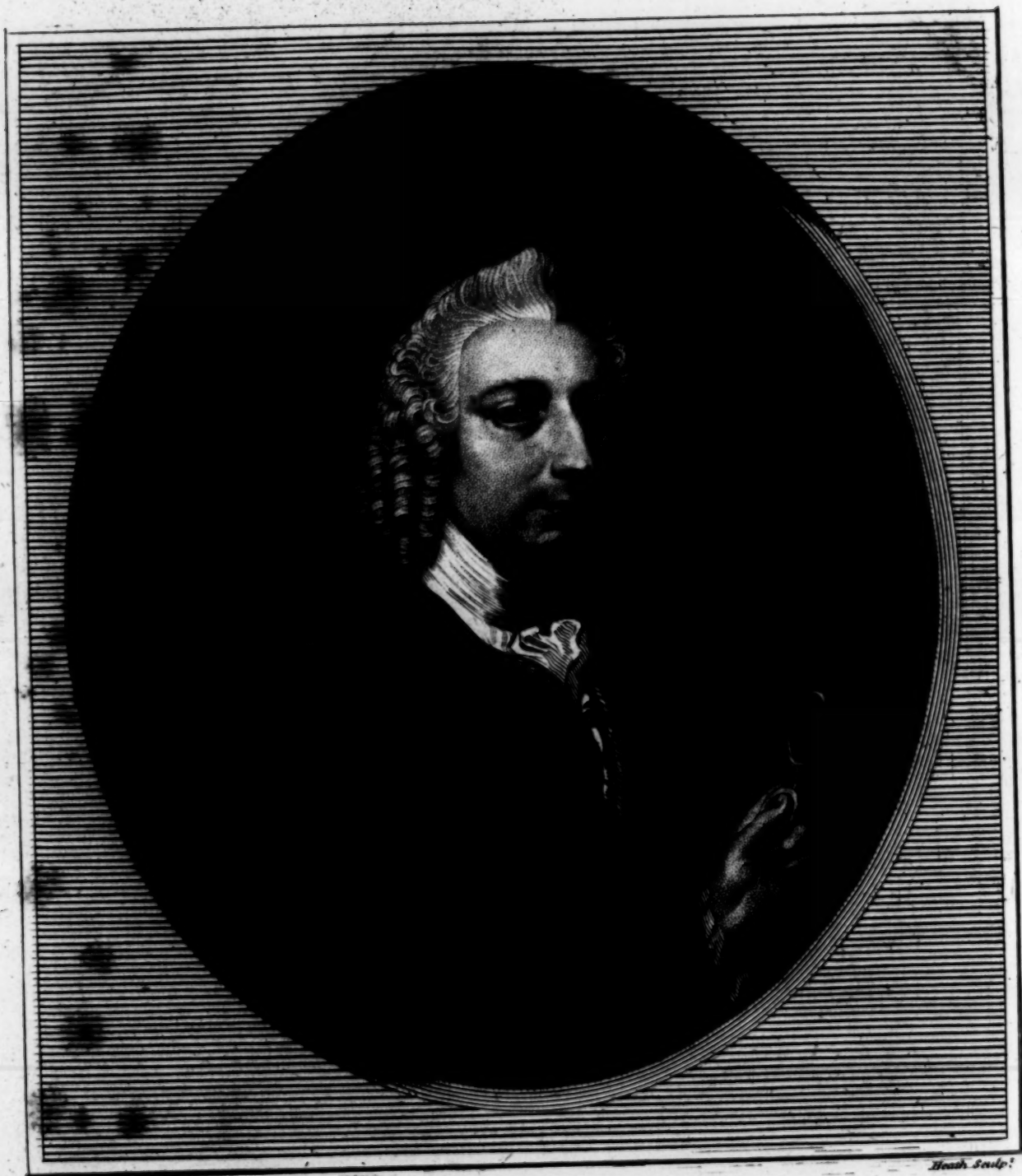
Rousseau's Letters: I am reading heavily, heavily! He justifies himself, till he convinces me that he deserved to be burnt, at least that his book did. I am not got through him, and you never will. Voltaire I detest, and have not seen his book: I shall in good time. You surprise me, when you talk of going in February! Pray, does all the minority go too? I hope you have a reason. *Desperare de republica* is a deadly sin in politics.

Adieu! I will not take my leave of you; for (you perceive) this letter means to beg another, when you can spare a little.

* Mr. Gray may probably allude to a pamphlet called "A Letter concerning libels, warrants, seizure of papers, and security for the peace or behaviour, with a view to some late proceedings, and the defence of them by the majority."—Supposed to have been written by William Greaves, esq. a master in Chancery, under the inspection of the late lord Camden. E.

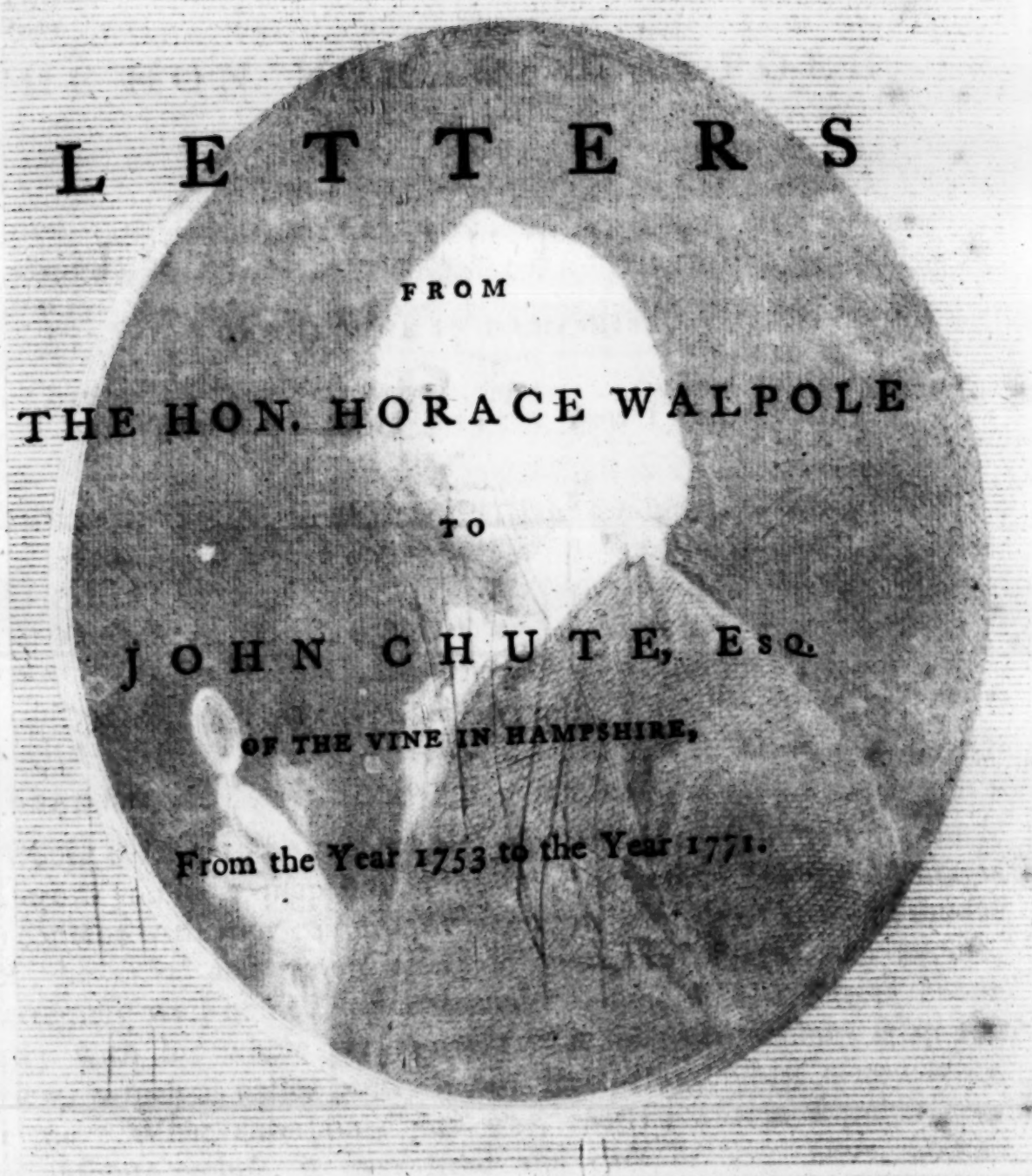
* The Lettres de la Montagne.

* To Paris.



John Chute

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L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

J O H N C H U T E, E S Q.

OF THE VINE IN HAMPSHIRE,

From the Year 1753 to the Year 1771.

LETTERS

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

JOHN CHUTE, Esq.

OF THE VINE IN HAMPSHIRE,

From the Year 1753 to the Year 1771.

LETTER L.

TO MR. CHUTE.

Stowe, Aug. 4, 1753.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOU would deserve to be scolded, if you had not lost almost as much pleasure as you have disappointed me of¹. Whether George Montagu will be so content with your commuting punishments, I don't know: I should think not: he *cried and roared all night*² when I delivered your excuse. He is extremely well-housed, after having roamed like a Tartar about the country with his whole personal estate at his heels. There is an extensive view, which is called pretty: but Northamptonshire is no county to please me. What entertained me was, that he who in London was grown an absolute recluse, is over head and ears in neighbours, and as

¹ In not accompanying Mr. Walpole on a visit to Mr. George Montagu at Greatworth.

² A phrase of Mr. Montagu's.

popular

popular as if he intended to stand for the county, instead of having given up the town. The very first morning after my arrival, as we were getting into the chaise to go to Wroxton, they notified a fir ———, a young squire, booted and spurred, and buckskin-breeched. "Will you drink any chocolate?" — "No; a little wine and water, if you please." — I suspected nothing but that he had rode till he was dry. "Nicolò, get some wine and water." He desired the water might be warm — I began to stare — Montagu understood the dialect, and ordered a negus. — I had great difficulty to keep my countenance, and still more when I saw the baronet finish a very large jug indeed. To be sure, he wondered as much at me who did not finish a jug; and I could not help reflecting, that living always in the world makes one as unfit for living out of it, as always living out of it does for living in it. Knightley, the knight of the shire, has been entertaining all the parishes round with a turtle-feast, which, so far from succeeding, has almost made him suspected for a Jew, as the country parsons have not yet learned to wade into green fat.

The roads are very bad to Greatworth, and such numbers of gates, that if one loved punning one should call it the *Gate-house*. The proprietor had a wonderful invention: the chimneys, which are of stone, have niches and benches in them, where the man used to sit and smoke. I had twenty disasters, according to custom; lost my way, and had my French boy almost killed by a fall with his horse: but I have been much pleased. When I was at Park-place I went to see fir H. Englefield's¹, which Mr. C ——— and lady M ——— prefer, but I think very undeservedly, to Mr. Southcote's. It is not above a quarter as extensive, and wants the river. There is a pretty view of Reading seen under a rude arch, and the water is well disposed. The buildings are very insignificant, and the house far from good. The town of Henley has been extremely disturbed with an engagement between the ghosts of miss Blandy and her father, which continued so violent, that some bold persons, to prevent farther bloodshed, broke in, and found it was two jackasses which had got into the kitchen.

I felt strangely tempted to stay at Oxford and survey it at my leisure; but, as I was alone, I had not courage. I passed by fir James Dashwood's², a vast new house, situated so high that it seems to stand for the county as well as himself. I did look over lord Jersey's³, which was built for a hunting-

¹ Whiteknights.² At High Wycombe.³ Middleton.

box, and is still little better. But now I am going to tell you how delightful a day I passed at Wroxton. Lord Guildford has made George Montagu so absolutely viceroy over it, that we saw it more agreeably than you can conceive; roamed over the whole house, found every door open, saw not a creature, had an extreme good dinner, wine, fruit, coffee and tea in the library, were served by fairies, tumbled over the books, said one or two talismanic words, and the cascade played, and went home loaded with pine-apples and flowers.—You will take me for monsieur de Coulanges, I describe eatables so feelingly; but the manner in which we were served made the whole delicious. The house was built by a lord Downe in the reign of James the first; and though there is a fine hall and a vast dining-room below, and as large a drawing-room above, it is neither good nor agreeable; one end of the front was never finished, and might have a good apartment. The library is added by this lord, and is a pleasant chamber. Except loads of old portraits, there is no tolerable furniture. A whole length of the first earl of Downe is in the bath-robcs, and has a coif under the hat and feather. There is a charming picture of prince Henry about twelve years old, drawing his sword to kill a stag, with a lord Harrington; a good portrait of sir Owen Hopton, 1590; your *pious* grandmother my lady Dacre, which I think like you; some good Cornelius Johnsons; a lord North by Riley, good; and an extreme fine portrait by him of the lord keeper: I have never seen but few of the hand, but most of them have been equal to Lely and the best of sir Godfrey. There is too a curious portrait of sir Thomas Pope, the founder of Trinity-college, Oxford, said to be by Holbein. The chapel is new, but in a pretty Gothic taste, with a very long window of painted glass, very tolerable. The frieze is pendent, just in the manner I propose for the eating-room at Strawberry-hill. Except one scene, which is indeed noble, I cannot much commend the without-doors. This scene consists of a beautiful lake entirely shut in with wood: the head falls into a fine cascade, and that into a serpentine river, over which is a little Gothic seat like a round temple, lifted up by a shaggy mount. On an eminence in the park is an obelisk erected to the honour and at the expence of “*optimus and magnificentissimus*” the late prince of Wales, “*in loci amœnitatem et memoriam adventûs ejus.*” There are several paltry Chinese buildings and bridges, which have the merit or demerit of being the progenitors of a very numerous race all over the kingdom: at least they were of the very first. In the church is a beautiful tomb of an earl and countess of Downe, and the tower is in a

good plain Gothic style, and was once, they tell you, still more beautiful; but Mr. Miller, who designed it, unluckily once in his life happened to think rather of beauty than of the water-tables, and so it fell down the first winter.

On Wednesday morning we went to see a sweet little chapel at Steane, built in 1620 by sir T. Crewe, speaker in the time of the first James and Charles. Here are remains of the mansion-house, but quite in ruins: the chapel is kept up by my lady Arran, the last of the race. There are seven or eight monuments. On one is this epitaph, which I thought pretty enough:

Conjux casta, parens felix, matrona pudica,
Sara viro, mundo Martha, Maria Deo.

On another is the most affected inscription I ever saw, written by two brothers on their sister; they say, *This agreeable mortal translated her into immortality such a-day*: but I could not help laughing at one quaint expression, to which time has given a droll sense: *She was a constant lover of the best.*

I have been here these two days, extremely amused and charmed indeed. Wherever you stand you see an Albano landscape. Half as many buildings I believe would be too many, but such a profusion gives inexpressible richness. You may imagine I have some private reflections entertaining enough, not very communicable to the company: The temple of Friendship, in which, among twenty memorandums of quarrels, is the bust of Mr. Pitt: Mr. James Grenville is now in the house, whom his uncle disinherited for his attachment to that very Pylades Mr. Pitt. He broke with Mr. Pope, who is deified in the Elysian fields, before the inscription for his head was finished. That of sir J. Barnard, which was bespoke by the name of a bust of my lord mayor, was by a mistake of the sculptor done for alderman Perry. The statue of the king, and that "*honor, laud, virtuti divæ Carolinæ*," make one smile, when one sees the ceiling where Britannia rejects and hides the reign of king——But I have no patience at building and planting a satire! Such is the temple of modern virtue in ruins! The Grecian temple is glorious: this I openly worship: in the heretical corner of my heart I adore the Gothic building, which by some unusual inspiration Gibbs has made pure and beautiful and venerable. The style has a propensity to the Venetian, or mosque-gothic, and the great column near it makes the whole put one in mind

mind of the place of St. Mark. The windows are throughout consecrated with painted glass; most of it from the priory at Warwick, a present from that foolish ———, who quarrelled with me (because his father was a gardener) for asking him if lord Brook had planted much.——A-propos to painted glass. I forgot to tell you of a sweet house which Mr. Montagu carried me to see, belonging to a Mr. Holman, a catholic, and called Warkworth. The situation is pretty, the front charming, composed of two round and two square towers. The court within is incomplete on one side; but above stairs is a vast gallery with four bow-windows and twelve other large ones, all filled with the arms of the old peers of England with all their quarterings entire. You don't deserve, after deserting me, that I should tempt you to such a sight; but this alone is worth while to carry you to Greatworth.

Adieu, my dear sir! I return to Strawberry to-morrow, and forgive you enough not to deprive myself of the satisfaction of seeing you there whenever you have nothing else to do.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER II.

Arlington-street, April 30, 1754.

MY God! Farinelli, what has this nation done to the king of Spain, that the moment we have any thing dear and precious, he should tear it from us?——This is not the beginning of my letter to you, nor does it allude to *Mr. Bentley*: much less is it relative to the captivity of the ten tribes; nor does *the king* signify Benhadad, or Tiglath-pileser; nor Spain, Assyria, as doctor Pocock or Warburton, misled by dissimilitude of names, or by the Septuagint, may for very good reasons imagine—but it is literally the commencement of my lady Rich's¹ epistle to Farinelli, on the recall of general Wall, as she relates it herself. It serves extremely well for my own lamentation,

¹ One of the daughters and coheiresses of the lord Mohun killed in a duel with duke Hamilton. E.

tation, when I sit down by the waters of Strawberry, and think of ye, O Chute and Bentley!

I have seen *Creusa*, and more than agree with you: it is the only new tragedy that I ever saw, and really liked. The plot is most interesting, and, though so complicated, quite clear and natural. The circumstance of so much distress being brought on by characters, every one good, yet acting consistently with their principles towards the misfortunes of the drama, is quite new and pleasing. Nothing offended me but that lisping miss Haughton, whose every speech is inarticulately oracular.

I was last night at a little ball at lady Anne Furness's for the new lords, Dartmouth and North; but nothing passed worth relating: indeed the only event since you left London was the tragi-comedy that was acted last Saturday at the opera. One of the dramatic guards fell flat on his face and motionless in an apoplectic fit. The princess¹ and her children were there. Miss Chudleigh, who *apparemment* had never seen a man fall on his face before, went into the most theatric fit of kicking and shrieking that ever was seen. Several other women, who were preparing their fits, were so distanced, that she had the whole house to herself, and indeed such a confusion for half an hour I never saw! The next day at my lady Townshend's old Charles Stanhope asked what these fits were called? Charles Townshend replied, "*The true convulsive fits, to be had only of the maker.*"

Adieu, my dear sir! To-day looks summerish, but we have no rain yet.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER III.

Arlington-street, May 14, 1754.

MY DEAR SIR,

I WROTE to you the last day of last month: I only mention it, to show you that I am punctual to your desire. It is my only reason for writing

¹ The princess of Wales, mother to his present majesty.

to-day, for I have nothing new to tell you. The town is empty, dusty, and disagreeable; the country is cold and comfortless; consequently I daily run from one to t'other, as if both were so charming that I did not know which to prefer. I am at present employed in no very lively manner; in reading a treatise on commerce, which count Perron has lent me, of his own writing: this obliges me to go through with it, though the subject and the style of the French would not engage me much. It does not want sense.

T'other night a description was given me of the most extraordinary declaration of love that ever was made. Have you seen young Poniatowski? He is very handsome. You *have* seen the figure of the duchess of G——, who looks like a raw-boned Scotch metaphysician that has got a red face by drinking water. One day at the drawing-room, having never spoken to him, she sent one of the foreign ministers to invite Poniatowski to dinner with her for the next day. He bowed, and went. The moment the door opened, her two little sons, attired like Cupids with bows and arrows, shot at him, and one of them literally hit his hair, and was very near putting his eye out, and hindering his casting it to the couch.

Where she, another sea-born Venus, lay.

The only company besides this highland goddess were two Scotchmen, who could not speak a word of any language but their own Erse; and to complete his astonishment at this allegorical entertainment, with the dessert there entered a little horse, and galloped round the table; a hieroglyphic I cannot solve. Poniatowski accounts for this profusion of kindness by his great-grandmother being a G——; but I believe it is to be accounted for by * * * * *

Adieu, my dear sir!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

² Stanislaus, the late ill-fated king of Poland.

LETTER

414 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

LETTER IV.

Strawberry-hill, July 12, 1757.

IT would be very easy to persuade me to a *Vine-voyage*^{*}, without your being so indebted to me, if it were possible. I shall represent my impediments, and then you shall judge. I say nothing of the heat of this magnificent weather, with the glass yesterday up to three-quarters of sultry. In all English probability this will not be a hindrance long; though at present, so far from travelling, I have made the tour of my own garden but once these three days before eight at night, and then I thought I should have died of it. For how many years we shall have to talk of the summer of fifty-seven!—But hear: My lady A—— and miss Rich come hither on Thursday for two or three days; and on Monday next the *Officina Arbuteana* opens in form. The stationers' company, that is, Mr. Doddsley, Mr. Tonson, &c. are summoned to meet here on Sunday night. And with what do you think we open? *Cedite, Romani Impreffores*—with nothing under *Graii Carmina*. I found him in town last week: he had brought his two Odes to be printed. I snatched them out of Doddsley's hands, and they are to be the first fruits of my press. An edition of Hentznerus, with a version by Mr. Bentley and a little preface of mine, were prepared, but are to wait—Now, my dear sir, can I stir?

Not ev'n thy virtues, tyrant, shall avail!

Is not it the plainest thing in the world that I cannot go to you yet, but that you must come to me?

I tell you no news, for I know none, think of none. Elzevir, Aldus and Stephens are the freshest personages in my memory. Unless I was appointed printer of the Gazette, I think nothing could at present make me read an article in it. Seriously, you must come to us, and shall be witness that the first holidays we have I will return with you. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* To visiting Mr. Chute at the Vine, his seat in Hampshire.

LETTER

TO JOHN CHUTE, Esq.

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LETTER V.

Strawberry-hill, July 26, 1757.

I LOVE to communicate my satisfactions to you. You will imagine that I have got an original portrait of John Guttemburg, the first inventor of printing, or that I have met with a little *boke* called *Eneydos*, which I am going to translate and print—No, no; far beyond any such thing! Old lady Sandwich^{*} is dead at Paris, and my lord has given me her picture of Ninon L'Enclos; given it me in the prettiest manner in the world.—I beg, if he should ever meddle in any election in Hampshire, that you will serve him to the last drop of your shrievalty. If you reckon by the thermometer of my natural impatience, the picture would be here already, but I fear I must wait some time for it.

The press goes on as fast as if I printed myself. I hope in a very few days to send you a specimen, though I could wish you was at the birth of the first produce. Gray has been gone these five days. Mr. Bentley has been ill, and is not recovered of the sweating-sickness, which I now firmly believe was only a hot summer like this, and England, being so unused to it, took it for a malady. Mr. Müntz is not gone; but pray don't think that I keep him: he has absolutely done nothing this whole summer but paste two chimney-boards. In short, instead of Claud Lorrain, he is only one of Bromwich's men.

You never saw any thing so droll as Mrs. Clive's countenance, between the heat of the summer, the pride in her legacy[†], and the efforts to appear concerned.

We have given ourselves for a day or two the air of an earthquake, but it proved an explosion of the powder-mills at Epsom. I asked Louis if it had done any mischief: he said, Only blown a man's head off; as if that was a part one could spare!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

^{*} Daughter of the famous Wilmot earl of Rochester.

[†] A legacy of 50/. left her by John Robarts, the last earl of Radnor of that family.

P. S.

416 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

P. S. I hope Dr. Warburton will not think I encroach either upon his commentatorship or private pretensions, if I assume these lines of Pope, thus altered, for myself:

Some have for wits and then for poets pass'd,
Turn'd printers next, and prov'd plain fools at last.

LETTER VI.

Strawberry-hill, June 29, 1738.

THE Tower-guns have sworn through thick and thin that prince Ferdinand has entirely demolished the French, and the city-bonfires all believe it. However, as no officer is yet come, nor confirmation, my crackers suspend their belief. Our great fleet is stepped ashore again near Cherbourg; I suppose, to singe half a yard more of the coast. This is all I know; less, as you may perceive, than any thing but the Gazette.

What is become of Mr. Montagu? Has he stolen to Southampton, and slipped away a-volunteering like Norborne Berkeley, to conquer France in a dirty shirt and a frock? He might gather forty load more of laurels in my wood. I wish I could flatter myself that you would come with him.

My lady Suffolk has at last entirely submitted her barn to our ordination. As yet it is only in *Deacon's orders*; but will very soon have our last imposition of hands. Adieu! Let me know a word of you.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* Mr. George Montagu.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

Paris, October 3, 1765.

I DON'T know where you are, nor when I am likely to hear of you. I write at random, and, as I talk, the first thing that comes into my pen.

I am, as you certainly conclude, much more amused than pleased. At a certain time of life, fights and new objects may entertain one, but new people cannot find any place in one's affection. New faces with some name or other belonging to them, catch my attention for a minute—I cannot say many preserve it. Five or six of the women that I have seen already, are very sensible. The men are in general much inferior, and not even agreeable. They sent us their best, I believe, at first, the duc de Nivernois. Their authors, who by the way are every where, are worse than their own writings, which I don't mean as a compliment to either. In general, the style of conversation is solemn, pedantic, and seldom animated, but by a dispute. I was expressing my aversion to disputes: Mr. Hume, who very gratefully admires the tone of Paris, having never known any other tone, said with great surprise, "Why, what do you like, if you hate both disputes and whiff?"

What strikes me the most upon the whole is, the total difference of manners between them and us, from the greatest object to the least. There is not the smallest similitude in the twenty-four hours. It is obvious in every trifle. Servants carry their lady's train, and put her into her coach with their hat on. They walk about the streets in the rain with umbrellas to avoid putting on their hats; driving themselves in open chaises in the country without hats, in the rain too, and yet often wear them in a chariot in Paris when it does not rain. The very footmen are powdered from the break of day, and yet wait behind their master, as I saw the duc of Praslin's do, with a red pocket handkerchief about their necks. Versailles, like every thing else, is a mixture of parade and poverty, and in every instance exhibits something most dissonant from our manners. In the colonnades, upon the staircases, nay in the anti-chambers of the royal family, there are people selling all sorts of wares. While we were waiting in the dauphin's sumptu-

ous bed-chamber, till his dressing-room door should be opened, two fellows were sweeping it, and dancing about in sabots to rub the floor.

You perceive that I have been presented. The queen took great notice of me; none of the rest said a syllable. You are let into the king's bed-chamber just as he has put on his shirt; he dresses and talks good-humouredly to a few, glares at strangers, goes to mass, to dinner, and a-hunting. The good old queen, who is like lady Primrose in the face, and queen Caroline in the immensity of her cap, is at her dressing-table, attended by two or three old ladies, who are languishing to be in Abraham's bosom, as the only man's bosom to whom they can hope for admittance. Thence you go to the dauphin, for all is done in an hour. He scarce stays a minute; indeed, poor creature, he is a ghost, and cannot possibly last three months. The dauphiness is in her bed-chamber, but dressed and standing; looks cross, is not civil, and has the true Westphalian grace and accents. The four mesdames, who are clumsy plump old wenches, with a bad likeness to their father, stand in a bed-chamber in a row, with black cloaks and knotting bags, looking good-humoured, not knowing what to say, and wriggling as if they wanted to make water. This ceremony too is very short: then you are carried to the dauphin's three boys, who you may be sure only bow and stare. The duke of Berry looks weak and weak-eyed: the count de Provence is a fine boy; the count d'Artois well enough. The whole concludes with seeing the dauphin's little girl dine, who is as round and fat as a pudding.

In the queen's anti-chamber we foreigners and the foreign ministers were shown the famous beast of the Gevaudan, just arrived, and covered with a cloth, which two chasseurs lifted up. It is an absolute wolf, but uncommonly large, and the expression of agony and fierceness remains strongly imprinted on its dead jaws.

I dined at the duc of Praslin's with four-and-twenty ambassadors and envoys, who never go but on Tuesdays to court. He does the honours sadly, and I believe nothing else well, looking important and empty. The duc de Choiseul's face, which is quite the reverse of gravity, does not promise much more. His wife is gentle, pretty, and very agreeable. The duchess of Praslin, jolly, red-faced, looking very vulgar, and being very attentive and civil. I saw the duc de Richelieu in waiting, who is pale,

except

except his nose, which is red, much wrinkled, and exactly a remnant of that age which produced general Churchill, Wilkes the player, the duke of Argyle, &c.—Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VIII.

Bath, October 10, 1756.

I AM impatient to hear that your charity to me has not ended in the gout to yourself—all my comfort is, if you have it, that you have good lady Brown to nurse you.

My health advances faster than my amusement. However, I have been at one opera, Mr. Wesley's. They have boys and girls with charming voices, that sing hymns, in parts, to Scotch ballad tunes; but indeed so long, that one would think they were already in eternity, and knew how much time they had before them. The chapel is very neat, with true Gothic windows (yet I am not converted); but I was glad to see that luxury is creeping in upon them before persecution: they have very neat mahogany stands for branches, and brackets of the same in taste. At the upper end is a broad *hautpas* of four steps, advancing in the middle; at each end of the broadest part are two of *my* eagles¹ with red cushions for the parson and clerk. Behind them rise three more steps, in the midst of which is a third eagle for pulpit. Scarlet armed chairs to all three. On either hand a balcony for elect ladies. The rest of the congregation sit on forms. Behind the pit, in a dark niche, is a plain table within rails; so you see the throne is for the apostle. Wesley is a lean elderly man, fresh-coloured, his hair smoothly combed, but with a *souffron* of curl at the ends. Wondrous clean, but as evidently an actor as Garrick. He spoke his sermon, but so fast and with so little accent, that I am sure he has often uttered it, for it was like a lesson. There were parts and eloquence in it; but towards the end he exalted his voice, and acted very vulgar enthusiasm; decried learning, and told stories, like Latimer, of the fool of his college, who said, I *thanks* God for every thing. Except a few from curiosity, and *some honourable women*, the congregation was very mean. There was a Scotch countess of B—,

¹ He means eagles in the same attitude as that in marble at Strawberry-hill. E.

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who is carrying a pure rosy vulgar face to heaven, and who asked miss Rich, if that was *the author of the poets*. I believe she meant me and the Noble Authors.

The Bedfords came last night. Lord Chatham was with me yesterday two hours; looks and walks well, and is in excellent political spirits.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER IX.

Paris, January 1765.

IT is in vain, I know, my dear sir, to scold you, though I have such a mind to it—nay, I must. Yes, you that will not lie a night at Strawberry in autumn for fear of the gout, to stay in the country till this time, and till you caught it! I know you will tell me, it did not come till you had been two days in town. Do, and I shall have no more pity for you, than if I was your wife, and had wanted to come to town two months ago.

I am perfectly well, though to be sure Lapland is the torrid zone in comparison of Paris. We have had such a frost for this fortnight, that I went nine miles to dine in the country to-day, in a villa exactly like a greenhouse, except that there was no fire but in one room. We were four in a coach, and all our chinks stopped with furs, and yet all the glasses were frozen. We dined in a paved hall painted in fresco, with a fountain at one end; for in this country they live in a perpetual opera, and persist in being young when they are old, and hot when they are frozen. At the end of the hall sat shivering three glorious maccaws, a vast cockatoo, and two poor perroquets, who squalled like the children in the wood after their nursery-fire! I am come home, and blowing my billets between every paragraph, yet can scarce move my fingers. However, I must be dressed presently, and go to the comtesse de la Marche, who has appointed nine at night for my audience. It seems a little odd to us to be presented to a princefs of the blood
at

at that hour—but I told you, there is not a tittle in which our manners resemble one another. I was presented to her father-in-law the prince of Conti last Friday. In the middle of the levée entered a young woman, too plain I thought to be any thing but his near relation. I was confirmed in my opinion, by seeing her, after he had talked to her, go round the circle and do the honours of it. I asked a gentleman near me if that was the comtesse de la Marche? He burst into a violent laughter, and then told me, it was mademoiselle Auguste, a dancer!—Now, who was in the wrong?

I give you these as samples of many scenes that have amused me, and which will be charming food at Strawberry. At the same time that I see all their ridicules, there is a *douceur* in the society of the women of fashion that captivates me. I like the way of life, though not lively; though the men are posits and apt to be arrogant, and though there are twenty ingredients wanting to make the style perfect. I have totally washed my hands of their scavants and philosophers, and do not even envy you Rousseau, who has all the charlatanerie of count St. Germain to make himself singular and talked of. I suppose Mrs. ———, my lord ———, and a certain lady friend of mine will be in raptures with him, especially as conducted by Mr. Hume. But however I admire his parts, neither he nor any *Genius* I have known has had common sense enough to balance the impertinence of their pretensions. They hate priests, but love dearly to have an altar at their feet; for which reason it is much pleasanter to read them than to know them. Adieu, my dear sir!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

January 15.

THis has been writ this week, and waiting for a conveyance, and as yet has got none. Favre tells me you are recovered, but you don't tell me so yourself. I inclose a trifle that I wrote lately¹, which got about and has made enormous noise in a city where they run and cackle after an event, like a parcel of hens after an accidental hulk of a grape. It has made me the fashion, and made madame de Boufflers and the prince of Conti very angry with me; the former intending to be rapt to the temple of Fame by clinging to Rousseau's Armenian robe. I am peevish that with his parts he

¹ The letter from the king of Prussia to Rousseau.

should be such a mountebank : but what made me more peevish was, that after receiving Wilkes with the greatest civilities, he paid court to Mr. Hume by complaining of Wilkes's visit and intrusion.

Upon the whole, I would not but have come hither; for, since I am doomed to live in England, it is some comfort to have seen that the French are ten times more contemptible than we are. I am a little ungrateful; but I cannot help seeing with my eyes, though I find other people make nothing of seeing without theirs. I have endless histories to amuse you with when we meet, which shall be at the end of March. It is much more tiresome to be fashionable than unpopular; I am used to the latter, and know how to behave under it: but I cannot stand for member of parliament of Paris. Adieu!

LETTER X.

Paris, August 30, 1769.

I HAVE been so hurried with paying and receiving visits, that I have not had a moment's worth of time to write. My passage was very tedious, and lasted near nine hours for want of wind——But I need not talk of my journey; for Mr. Morrice, whom I met on the road, will have told you that I was safe on terra firma.

Judge of my surprise at hearing four days ago that my lord D—— and my lady were arrived here. They are lodged within a few doors of me. He is come to consult a doctor Pomme, who has proscribed wine, and lord D—— already complains of the violence of his appetite. If you and I had *pommed* him to eternity, he would not have believed us. A man across the sea tells him the plainest thing in the world; that man happens to be called a doctor; and happening for novelty to talk common sense, is believed, as if he had talked nonsense! and what is more extraordinary, lord D—— thinks himself better, *though* he is so.

My dear old woman¹ is in better health than when I left her, and her

¹ Madame du Deffand.

spirits so increased, that I tell her she will go mad with age. When they ask her how old she is, she answers, J'ai soixante & mille ans. She and I went to the Boulevard last night after supper, and drove about there till two in the morning. We are going to sup in the country this evening, and are to go to-morrow night at eleven to the puppet-show. A protégé of hers has written a piece for that theatre. I have not yet seen madame du Barri, nor can get to see her picture at the exposition at the Louvre, the crowds are so enormous that go thither for that purpose. As royal curiosities are the least part of my virtù, I wait with patience. Whenever I have an opportunity I visit gardens, chiefly with a view to Rosette's¹ having a walk. She goes no where else, because there is a distemper among the dogs.

There is going to be represented a translation of Hamlet; who, when his hair is cut, and he is curled and powdered, I suppose will be exactly *monseigneur le prince Oreste*. T'other night I was at Merope. The Dumenil was as divine as Mrs. Porter; they said her familiar tones were those of a *poissonniere*. In the last act, when one expected the catastrophe, Narbas, more interested than any body to see the event, remained coolly on the stage to hear the story. The queen's maid of honour entered without her handkerchief, and with her hair most artfully undressed, and reeling as if she was maudlin, sobbed out a long narrative, that did not prove true; while Narbas, with all the good breeding in the world, was more attentive to her fright than to what had happened. So much for propriety. Now for probability. Voltaire has published a tragedy, called *Les Guebres*. Two Roman colonels open the piece: they are brothers, and relate to one another, how they lately in company destroyed, by the emperor's mandate, a city of the Guebres, in which were their own wives and children, and they recollect that they want prodigiously to know whether both their families did not perish in the flames. The son of the one and the daughter of the other are taken up for heretics, and, thinking themselves brother and sister, insist upon being married, and upon being executed for their religion. The son stabs his father, who is half a Guebre too. The high priest rants and roars. The emperor arrives, blames the pontiff for being a persecutor, and forgives the son for assassinating his father (who does not die) because—I don't know why, but that he may marry his cousin.—The grave-dig-

¹ A favourite dog of Mr. Walpole's.

gers in Hamlet have no chance, when such a piece as the Guebres is written agreeably to all rules and unities. Adieu, my dear sir! I hope to find you quite well at my return.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XI.

Amiens, Tuesday evening, July 9, 1771.

I AM got no farther yet, as I travel leisurely, and do not venture to fatigue myself. My voyage was but of four hours. I was sick only by choice and precaution, and find myself in perfect health. The enemy, I hope, has not returned to pinch you again, and that you defy the foul fiend. The weather is but lukewarm, and I should choose to have all the windows shut, if my smelling was not much more summerly than my feeling; but the frowns of obsolete tapestry and needle-work is insupportable. Here are old fleas and bugs talking of Louis quatorze like tattered refugees in the Park, and they make poor Rosette attend to them whether she will or not. This is a woful account of an evening in July, and which monsieur de St. Lambert has omitted in his Seasons, though more natural than any thing he has placed there. If the Grecian religion had gone into the folly of self-mortification, I suppose the devotees of Flora would have shut themselves up in a nasty inn, and have punished their noses for the sensuality of having smelt to a rose or a honey-suckle. This is all I have yet to say; for I have had no adventure, no accident, nor seen a soul but my cousin R—— W——, whom I met on the road and spoke to in his chaise. To-morrow I shall lie at Chantilly, and be at Paris early on Thursday. The C—— are there already. Good night—and a *sweet* one to you!

Paris, Wednesday night, July 10.

I WAS so suffocated with my inn last night, that I mustered all my resolution, rose with the alouette, and was in my chaise by five o'clock this morning. I got hither by eight this evening, tired, but rejoiced, have had a comfortable dish of tea, and am going to bed in clean sheets. I sink myself even to my dear old woman and my sister; for it is impossible to sit
down

down and be made charming at this time of night, after fifteen posts, and after having been here twenty times before.

At Chantilly I crossed on the countess of W——, who lies there to-night on her way to England. But I concluded she had no curiosity about me—and I could not brag of more about her—and so we had no intercourse.

I am woe-begone to find my lord F—— in the same hotel. He is as starched as an old-fashioned plaited neckcloth, and come to suck wisdom from this curious school of philosophy. He reveres me because I was acquainted with his father; and that does not at all increase my partiality to the son.

Luckily, the post departs early to-morrow morning. I thought you would like to hear I was arrived well. I should be happy to hear you are so; but do not torment yourself too soon, nor will I torment you. I have fixed the 26th of August for setting out on my return. These jaunts are too juvenile. I am ashamed to look back and remember in what year of Methuselah I was here first. Rosette sends her blessing to her daughter. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XII.

Paris, August 5, 1771.

IT is a great satisfaction to me to find by your letter of the 30th that you have had no return of your gout. I have been assured here that the best remedy is to cut one's nails in hot water.—It is, I fear, as certain as any other remedy! It would at least be so here, if their bodies were of a piece with their understandings; or if both were as curable, as they are the contrary. Your prophecy, I doubt, is not better founded than the prescription. I may be lame; but I shall never be a duck, nor deal in the garbage of the alley.

I envy your *Strawberry tide*, and need not say how much I wish I was there to receive you. Methinks I should be as glad of a little grass, as a

seaman after a long voyage. Yet English gardening gains ground here prodigiously—not much at a time indeed—I have literally seen one that is exactly like a taylor's paper of patterns. There is a monsieur Boutin, who has tacked a piece of what he calls an English garden to a set of stone-terrasses with steps of turf. There are three or four very high hills, almost as high as, and exactly in the shape of, a tansy-pudding. You squeeze between these and a river, that is conducted at obtuse angles in a stone-channel, and supplied by a pump; and when walnuts come in, I suppose it will be navigable. In a corner enclosed by a chalk wall are the samples I mentioned: there is a stripe of grass, another of corn, and a third *en friche*, exactly in the order of beds in a nursery. They have translated Mr. Whateley's book, and the lord knows what barbarism is going to be laid at our door. This new Anglomanie will literally be *mad English*.

New arrêts, new retrenchments, new misery, stalk forth every day. The parliament of Besançon is dissolved; so are the *grenadiers de France*. The king's tradesmen are all bankrupt, no pensions are paid, and every body is reforming their suppers and equipages. Despotism makes converts faster than ever christianity did. Louis quinze is the true Rex christianissimus, and has ten times more success than his dragooning great grandfather. Adieu, my dear sir!

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Friday 9th.

THIS was to have gone by a private hand, but cannot depart till Monday; so I may be continuing my letter till I bring it myself. I have been again at the Chartreuse; and though it was the sixth time, I am more enchanted with those paintings^{*} than ever. If it is not the first work in the world, and must yield to the Vatican, yet in simplicity and harmony it beats Raphael himself. There is a vapour over all the pictures that makes them more natural than any representation of objects—I cannot conceive how it is effected! you see them through the shine of a south-east wind. These poor folks do not know the inestimable treasure they possess—but they are perishing these pictures, and one gazes at them as at a setting sun. There is the purity of Racine in them, but they give me more pleasure—and I should much sooner be tired of the poet than of the painter.

^{*} The life of St. Bruno, painted by Le Sœur, in the cloister of the Chartreuse at Paris. E.

It is very singular that I have not half the satisfaction in going into churches and convents that I used to have. The consciousness that the vision is dispelled, the want of fervour so obvious in the religious, the solitude that one knows proceeds from contempt, not from contemplation, make those places appear like abandoned theatres destined to destruction. The monks trot about as if they had not long to stay there; and what used to be holy gloom is now but dirt and darkness. There is no more deception, than in a tragedy acted by candle-snuffers. One is sorry to think that an empire of common sense would not be very picturesque; for, as there is nothing but taste that can compensate for the imagination of madness, I doubt there will never be twenty men of taste for twenty thousand madmen. The world will no more see Athens, Rome, and the Medici again, than a succession of five good emperors, like Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and the two Antonines.

August 13.

Mr. Edmondson has called on me; and as he sets out to-morrow, I can safely trust my letter to him.

I have, I own, been much shocked at reading Gray's death in the papers. 'Tis an hour that makes one forget any subjects of complaint, especially towards one with whom I lived in friendship from thirteen years old. As self lies so rooted in self, no doubt the nearness of our ages made the stroke recoil to my own breast; and having so little expected his death, it is plain how little I expect my own. Yet to you, who of all men living are the most forgiving, I need not excuse the concern I feel. I fear, most men ought to apologize for their want of feeling, instead of palliating that sensation when they have it. I thought that what I had seen of the world had hardened my heart; but I find it had formed my language, not extinguished my tenderness. In short, I am really shocked—nay, I am hurt at my own weakness, as I perceive that when I love any body, it is for my life; and I have had too much reason not to wish that such a disposition may very seldom be put to the trial. You at least are the only person to whom I would venture to make such a confession.

Adieu, my dear sir!—Let me know when I arrive, which will be about the
I i i 2 last

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last day of the month, when I am likely to see you. I have much to say to you. Of being here I am most heartily tired, and nothing but this dear old woman should keep me here an hour—I am weary of them to death—but that is not new!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.





William Wentworth, Earl of Strafford. &c.

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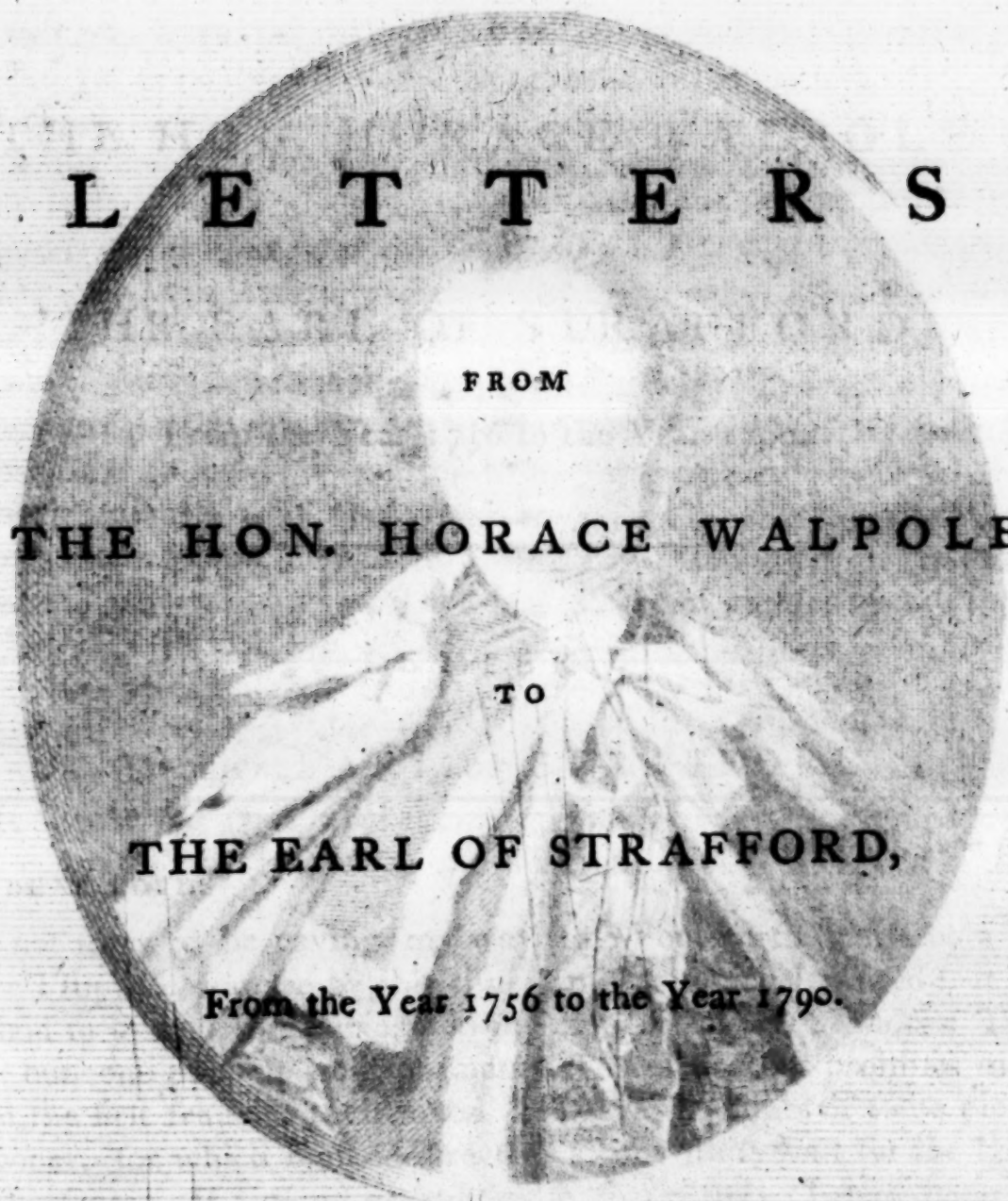
FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE EARL OF STRAFFORD,

From the Year 1756 to the Year 1790.



William Sturton del. J. H. Sturton sculp.

LETTERS

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WADE

TO

THE EARL OF STAFFORD

From the Year 1800 to 1820

Wm. H. Murray Esq. Secy. of State

LETTERS

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE EARL OF STRAFFORD,

From the Year 1756 to the Year 1790.

LETTER I.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry-hill, June 6, 1756.

MY DEAR LORD,

I AM not sorry to be paving my way to Wentworth castle by a letter, where I suppose you are by this time, and for which I waited: it is not that I staid so long before I executed my embassy *auprès de milord* Tylney. He has but one pair of gold pheasants at present, but promises my lady Strafford the first fruits of their loves. He gave me hopes of some pied peacocks sooner, for which I asked directly, as one must wait for the lying-in of the pheasants. If I go on *negotiating* so successfully, I may hope to arrive at a peerage a little sooner than my uncle has.

As your lordship, I know, is so good as to interest yourself in the calamities of your friends, I will, as shortly as I can, describe and grieve your heart with a catastrophe that has happened to two of them. My lady A—, Mr.

Mr. Conway, and miss Rich passed two days last week at Strawberry-hill. We were returning from Mrs. Clive's through the long field, and had got over the high stile that comes into the road, that is, three of us. It had rained, and the stile was wet. I could not let miss Rich straddle across so damp a palfrey; but took her in my arms to lift her over. At that instant I saw a coach and six come thundering down the hill from my house; and hurrying to set down my charge, and stepping backwards, I missed the first step, came down headlong with the nymph in my arms: but turning quite round as we rushed to the ground, the first thing that touched the earth was miss Rich's head. You must guess in how improper a situation we fell; and you must not tell my lady Strafford before any body, that every petticoat, &c. in the world were canted—high enough indeed! The coach came on, and never stopped. The apprehension that it would run over my Chloe, made me lie where I was, holding out my arm to keep off the horses, which narrowly missed trampling us to death. The ladies, who were lady Holderness, miss Pelham, and your sister lady M——C——, stared with astonishment at the theatre which they thought I had chosen to celebrate our loves; the footmen laughed; and you may imagine the astonishment of Mr. Conway and lady A——, who did not see the fall, but turned and saw our attitude. It was these spectators that amazed miss Pelham, who described the adventure to Mrs. Pitt, and said, "What was most amazing, there was Mr. Conway and lady A—— looking on!" I shall be vexed to have told you this long story, if lady Mary has writ it already; only tell me honestly if she has described it as decently as I have.

If you have not got the new letters and memoires of madame Maintenon, I beg I may recommend them for your summer reading. As far as I have got, which is but into the fifth volume of the letters, I think you will find them very curious, and some very entertaining. The fourth volume has persuaded me of the sincerity of her devotion; and two or three letters at the beginning of my present tome have made me even a little jealous for my adored madame de Sevigné. I am quite glad to find that they do *not* continue equally agreeable.—The extreme misery to which France was reduced at the end of queen Anne's war, is more striking than one could conceive. I hope it is a debt that they are not going to pay, though the news that arrived on Wednesday have but a black aspect.—The consternation on the behaviour of Byng, and on the amazing council of war at Gibraltar,

raltar is extreme : many think both next to impossibilities. In the mean time we fear the loss of Minorca ! I could not help smiling t'other day at two passages in madame Maintenon's letters relating to the duc de Richelieu, when he first came into the world : " Jamais homme n'a mieux reussi à la cour, la premiere fois qu'il y a paru : c'est réellement une très-jolie creature !" Again :—" C'est la plus aimable poupée qu'on puisse voir." How mortifying, that this *jolie poupée* should be the avenger of the Valoises !

Adieu, my lord !—I don't believe that a daughter of the duke of Argyle* will think that the present I have announced in the first part of my letter balances the inglorious article in the end. I wish you would both renew the breed of heroes, which seems scarcer than that of gold pheasants !

Your most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER II.

Strawberry-hill, July 4, 1757.

MY DEAR LORD,

IT is well I have not obeyed you sooner, as I have often been going to do : what a heap of lies and contradictions I should have sent you ! What joint ministries and sole ministries ! What acceptances and resignations !—Viziers and bowstrings never succeeded one another quicker. Luckily I have staid till we have got an administration that will last a little more than for ever. There is such content and harmony in it, that I don't know whether it is not as perfect as a plan which I formed for Charles Stanhope, after he had plagued me for two days for news. I told him the duke of Newcastle was to take orders, and have the reversion of the bishoprick of Winchester ; that Mr. Pitt was to have a regiment, and go over to the Duke ; and Mr. Fox to be chamberlain to the princess, in the room of sir William Irby. Of all the new system I believe the happiest is O——; though in great humility he says he only takes the bed-chamber *to accommodate*. Next to

* Lady Strafford was the youngest daughter of John duke of Argyle.

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him in joy is the earl of Holderness—who has not got the garter. My lord Waldegrave has; and the garter by this time I believe has got fifty spots¹.

Had I written sooner, I should have told your lordship too of the king of Prussia's triumphs—but they are addled too! I hoped to have had a few bricks from Prague to send you towards building Mr. Bentley's design, but I fear none will come from thence this summer. Thank God, the happiness of the menagerie does not depend upon administrations or victories! The happiest of beings in this part of the world is my lady Suffolk: I really think her acquisition and conclusion of her law-suit will lengthen her life ten years. You may be sure I am not so satisfied, as lady Mary² has left Sudbroke.

Are your charming lawns burnt up like our humble hills? Is your sweet river as low as our deserted Thames?—I am wishing for a handful or two of those floods that drowned me last year all the way from Wentworth-castle. I beg my best compliments to my lady, and my best wishes that every pheasant egg and peacock egg may produce as many colours as a harlequin-jacket.

I am hers and your lordship's most devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Tuesday, July 5.

LUCKILY, my good lord, my conscience had saved its distance. I had writ the above last night, when I received the honour of your kind letter this morning. You had, as I did not doubt, received accounts of all our strange histories. For that of the pretty countess, I fear there is too much truth in all you have heard: but you don't seem to know that lord Corydon and captain Corydon his brother have been most abominable. I don't care to write scandal; but when I see you, I will tell you how much the chits deserve to be whipped. Our favourite general³ is at his camp: lady A—— don't go to him these three weeks. I expect the pleasure of seeing her and miss Rich and Fred. Campbell here soon for a few days. I don't wonder your

¹ He was apt to be dirty.

² Lady Mary Coke, daughter of John Campbell, duke of Argyle, and sister to lady Strafford.

³ General Conway.

lordship likes St. Philippe better than Torcy : except a few passages interesting to Englishmen, there cannot be a more dry narration than the latter. There is an addition of seven volumes of Universal History to Voltaire's Works, which I think will charm you : I almost like it the best of his works. It is what you have seen extended, and the memoirs of Louis XIV. *refondues* in it. He is a little tiresome with contradicting La Beaumelle out of pique—and there is too much about Rousseau. Between La Beaumelle and Voltaire, one remains with scarce a fixed idea about that time. I wish they would produce their authorities and proofs ; without which, I am grown to believe neither. From mistakes in the English part, I suppose there are great ones in the more distant histories ; yet altogether it is a fine work. He is, as one might believe, worst informed on the present times.—He says eight hundred persons were put to death for the last rebellion—I don't believe a quarter of the number were : and he makes the first lord Derwentwater—who, poor man ! was in no such high-spirited mood—bring his son, who by the way was not above a year and a half old, upon the scaffold to be sprinkled with his blood.—However, he is in the right to expect to be believed : for he believes all the romances in lord Anson's Voyage, and how admiral Almanzor made one man of war box the ears of the whole empire of China !—I know nothing else new but a new edition of doctor Young's Works. If your lordship thinks like me, who hold that even in his most frantic rhapsodies there are innumerable fine things, you will like to have this edition. Adieu, once more, my best lord !

LETTER III.

Strawberry-hill, October 11, 1757.

MY DEAR LORD,

YOU will have seen or heard that the fleet is returned*. They have brought home nothing but one little island, which is a great deal more than I expected, having neither thought so despicably of France, or so considerably of ourselves, as to believe they were exposed to much damage. My joy for Mr. Conway's return is not at all lessened by the clamour on this disappoint-

* From the expedition against Rochfort.

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ment. Had he been chief commander, I should be very sure the nothing he had done was all he could do. As he was under orders, I wait with patience to hear his general's vindication.

I hope the Yorkists have not knocked out your brains for living in a county. In my neighbourhood they have insulted the parliament *in person*. He called in the blues, instead of piquing himself on dying in his Curule chair in the stable-yard at Ember-court.—So entirely have we lost our spirit, that the standing-army is forced to defend us against the people, when we endeavour to give them a militia, to save them from a standing-army; and that the representative of the parliament had rather owe his life to the guards than die in the cause of a militia. Sure Lenthall's ghost will come and pull him by the nose!

I hope you begin to cast a southward look, and that my lady's chickens and ducklings are old enough to go to a day-school, and will not want her any longer.

My lord Townshend and George^a are engaged in a paper-war against one another, about the militia. That bill, the suspension at Stade, and the late expedition which has cost millions, will find us in amusements this winter. It is lucky, for I despair of the Opera. The Mattei has sent certificates to prove that she is stopped by an inundation. The certificates I suppose can swim. Adieu, my dear lord!

My lady's and your most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER IV.

Arlington-street, June 16, 1758.

MY DEAR LORD,

I STAID to write to you, in obedience to your commands, till I had something worth telling you. St. Maloes is taken by storm. The governor leaped into the sea at the very name of the duke of Marlborough. Sir

^a Mr. Onslow, the speaker.

^a The present marquis Townshend.

James Lowther put his hand into his pocket, and gave the foldiers two hundred and fifty thousand pounds to drink the king's health on the top of the Great Church. Norborne Berkeley begged the favour of the bishop to go back with him and see his house in Gloucestershire. Delaval is turned capuchin, with remorse, for having killed four thousand French with his own hand. Commodore Howe¹ does nothing but *talk* of what he has done. Lord Downe, who has killed the intendant, has sent for Dupré² to put in his place; and my lord A—— has ravished three abbeſſes, the youngest of whom was eighty-five. Sure, my lord, this account is glorious enough! Don't you think one might 'bate a little of it? How much will you give up? Will you compound for the town capitulating, and for threeſcore men of war and two hundred privateers burned in the harbour? I would fain beat you down as low as I could.—What, if we should not have taken the town? Shall you be very much ſhocked, if, after burning two ſhips of fifty-four and thirty-fix guns, and a buſhel of privateers and ſmall-ware, we had thought it prudent to leave the town where we found it, and had re-embarked laſt Monday (in ſeven hours, the diſpatch of which implies at leaſt as much precipitation as conduct), and that of all the large bill of fare above, nothing ſhould be true but Downe's killing the intendant; who coming out to reconnoitre, and not ſurrendering, Downe at the head of ſome grenadiers ſhot him dead. In truth, this is all the truth, as it came in the middle of the night; and if your lordſhip is obſtinately bent on the conqueſt of France, you muſt wait till we have found another loophole into it, which it ſeems our fleet is gone to look for. I fear it is not even true that we have beat them in the Mediterranean! nor have I any hopes, but in admiral Forbes, who muſt ſail up the Rhone, burn Lyons, and force them to a peace at once.

I hope you have had as favourable ſucceſſion of fun and rain as we have. I go to Park-place next week, where I fancy I ſhall find our little duchefs³ quite content with the proſpect of recovering her duke⁴, without his being loaded with laurels like a bear's head. Adieu, my dear lord! My beſt compliments to my lady and her whole menagerie.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ The preſent earl Howe.

² A French maſter.

³ Of Richmond.

⁴ The duke of Richmond was a volunteer on the expedition to St. Maloes.

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LETTER V.

Strawberry-hill, June 12, 1759.

MY DEAR LORD,

AFTER so kind a note as you left for me at your going out of town, you cannot wonder that I was determined to thank you the moment I knew you settled in Yorkshire. At least I am not ungrateful, if I deserve your goodness by no other title. I was willing to stay till I could amuse you; but I have not a battle big enough even to send in a letter. A war that reaches from Muscovy to Alsace, and from Madras to California, don't produce an article half so long as Mr. Johnson's riding three horses at once. The king of Prussia's campaign is still in its papillotes; prince Ferdinand is laid up like the rest of the pensioners on Ireland; Guadaloupe has taken a sleeping-draught; and our heroes in America seem to be planting suckers of laurels that will not make any figure these three years. All the war that is in fashion lies between those two ridiculous things, an invasion and the militia. Prince Edward is going to sea, to inquire after the invasion from France; and all the old pot-bellied country colonels are preparing to march and make it drunk when it comes. I don't know, as it is an event in Mr. Pitt's administration, whether the jacobite corporations, who are converted by his eloquence which they never heard, do not propose to bestow their freedom on the first corps of French that shall land.

Adieu, my lord, and my lady! I hope you are all beauty and verdure. We are drowned with obtaining ours.

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VI.

Strawberry-hill, Thursday 3 o'clock, August 9, 1759.

MY DEAR LORD,

LORD Granby has entirely defeated the French!—The foreign gazettes, I suppose, will give this victory to prince Ferdinand; but the mob

At Minden.

of

of London, whom I have this minute left, and who must know best, assure me that it is all their own marquis's doing. Mr.¹ Yorke was the first to send this news, *to be laid with himself and all humility at his majesty's feet*², about eleven o'clock yesterday morning. At five this morning came captain Ligonier, who was dispatched in such a hurry that he had not time to pack up any particulars in his portmanteau: those we are expecting with our own army, who we conclude are now at Paris, and will lie to-morrow night at Amiens. All we know is, that not one Englishman is killed, nor one Frenchman left alive. If you should chance to meet a bloody waggon-load of heads, you will be sure that it is the part of the spoils that came to Downe's share, and going to be hung up in the great hall at Cowick³.

We have a vast deal of other good news; but as not one word of it is true, I thought you would be content with this victory. His majesty is *in high spirits*, and is to make a triumphal entry into Hanover on Tuesday fortnight. I envy you the illuminations and rejoicings that will be made at Workop on this occasion.

Four days ago we had a great victory over the Russians; but in the hurry of this triumph it has somehow or other been mislaid, and nobody can tell where to find it:—however, it is not given over for lost.

Adieu, my dear lord! As I have been so circumstantial in the account of this battle, I will not tire you with any thing else. My compliments to the lady of the menagerie.—I see your new offices⁴ rise every day in a very respectable manner.

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ The late lord Dover, then minister at the Hague.

² The words of his dispatch.

³ Lord Downe's feat in Yorkshire.

⁴ At lord Strafford's house at Twickenham.

LETTER VII.

Arlington-street, September 13, 1759.

MY DEAR LORD,

YOU are very good to say you would accept of my letters, though I should have no particular news to tell you; but at present, it would be treating heroes and conquerors with great superciliousness, if I made use of your indulgence and said nothing of them. We have taken more places and ships in a week than would have set up such pedant nations as Greece and Rome to all futurity. If we did but call sir William Johnson, Gulielmus Johnsonus Niagaricus; and Amherst, Galfridus Amhersta Ticonderogicus, we should be quoted a thousand years hence as the patterns of valour, virtue, and disinterestedness; for posterity always ascribes all manner of modesty and self-denial to those that take the most pains to perpetuate their own glory. Then admiral Boscawen has, in a very Roman style, made free with the coast of Portugal, and used it to make a bonfire of the French fleet. When Mr. Pitt was told of this infraction of a neutral territory, he replied, "It is very true, but they are burned."—In short, we want but a little more insolence and a worse cause to make us a very classic nation.

My lady T. who has not learning enough to copy a Spartan mother, has lost her youngest son. I saw her this morning—her affectation is on t'other side; she affects grief—but not so much for the son she has lost, as for t'other that she may lose.

Lord George¹ is come, has asked for a court-martial, was put off, and is turned out of every thing. Waldegrave has his regiment, for what he did; and lord Granby the ordnance—for what he would have done.

Lord Northampton is to be married² to-night in full *Comptonhood*.

I am indeed happy that Mr. Campbell³ is a general; but how will his father like being the *dowager general* Campbell?

You are very kind, my lord (but that is not new), in interesting yourself

¹ Lord George Sackville.

² To lady Anne Somerset.

³ The present duke of Argyle.

about Strawberry-hill. I have just finished a Holbein-chamber, that I flatter myself you will not dislike; and I have begun to build a new printing-house, that the old one may make room for the gallery and round tower. This noble summer is not yet over with us—it seems to have cut a colt's *week*. I never write without talking of it, and should be glad to know in how many letters *this summer* has been mentioned.

I have lately been at Wilton, and was astonished at the heaps of rubbish. The house is grand, and the place glorious; but I should shovel three parts of the marbles and pictures into the river. Adieu, my lord and lady!

Your faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VIII.

Strawberry-hill, October 30, 1759.

MY DEAR LORD,

IT would be very extraordinary indeed if I was not glad to see one whose friendship does me so much honour as your lordship's, and who always expresses so much kindness to me. I have an additional reason for thanking you now, when you are erecting a building after the design of the Strawberry-committee. It will look, I fear, very selfish, if I pay it a visit next year; and yet it answers so many selfish purposes that I certainly shall.

My ignorance of all the circumstances relating to Quebec is prodigious; I have contented myself with the rays of glory that reached hither, without going to London to bask in them. I have not even seen the conqueror's mother^{*}, though I hear she has covered herself with more laurel-leaves than were heaped on the children in the wood. Seriously it is very great; and as I am too inconsiderable to envy Mr. Pitt, I give him all the honour he deserves.

I passed all the last week at Park-place, where one of the bravest men in

^{*} Lady Townshend. On the death of general Wolfe, colonel now marquis Townshend received the surrender. E.

the world, who is not permitted to contribute to our conquests, was indulged in being the happiest by being with one of the most deserving women—for Campbell-goodness no more wears out than Campbell-beauty—all their good qualities are *huckaback*¹. You see the duchess² has imbibed so much of their durableness, that she is good-humoured enough to dine at a tavern at seventy-six.

Sir William Stanhope wrote to Mrs. Ellis³, that he had pleased himself, having seen much of Mr. Nugent and lady Berkeley, this summer, and having been so charmed with the felicity of their menage, that he could not resist marrying again. His daughter replied, that it had always been her opinion, that people should please themselves, and that she was glad he had; but as to taking the precedent of my lady Berkeley, she hoped it would answer in nothing but in my lady Stanhope having three children the first year. You see, my lord, Mrs. Ellis has bottled up her words⁴, till they sparkle at last!

I long to have your approbation of my Holbein-chamber; it has a comely sobriety that I think answers very well to the tone it should have. My new printing-house is finished, in order to pull down the old one, and lay the foundations next summer of my round tower. Then follows the gallery and chapel-cabinet.—I hear your lordship has tapped your magnificent front too. Well, when all your magnificences and my *minimificences* are finished, then, we—won't sit down and drink, as Pyrrhus said,—no, I trust we shall never conclude our plans so filthily; then—I fear we shall begin others.—Indeed, I don't know what the countess may do: if she imitates her mother, she will go to a tavern at fourscore, and then she and Pyrrhus may take a bottle together—I hope she will live to try at least whether she likes it. Adieu, both!

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Lady A——, and lady Strafford, both Campbells, preserved their beauty so long, that Mr. Walpole called them *huckaback beauties*, that never wear out. H. W.

² The duchess of Argyle, widow of John

Campbell, duke of Argyle, and mother to lady Strafford.

³ His daughter.

⁴ She was very silent.

LETTER IX.

Strawberry-hill, June 7, 1760.

MY DEAR LORD,

WHEN at my time of day one can think a ball worth going to London for on purpose, you will not wonder that I am childish enough to write an account of it. I could give a better reason, your bidding me send you any news; but I scorn a good reason when I am idle enough to do any thing for a bad one.

You had heard, before you left London, of miss Chudleigh's intended loyalty on the prince's birth-day. Poor thing, I fear she has thrown away above a quarter's salary! It was magnificent and well-understood—no crowd—and though a sultry night, one was not a moment incommoded. The court was illuminated on the whole summit of the wall with a battlement of lamps; smaller ones on every step, and a figure of lanthorns on the outside of the house. The virgin-mistress began the ball with the duke of York, who was dressed in a pale blue watered tabby, which, as I told him, if he danced much, would soon be *tabby all over*, like the man's advertisement¹; but nobody did dance much. There was a new miss Bishop from sir Cecil's endless hoard of beauty daughters, who is still prettier than her sisters. The new Spanish embassy was there—alas! Sir Cecil bishop has never been in Spain! Monsieur de Fuentes is a halfpenny print of my lord H——. His wife homely, but seems good-humoured and civil. The son does not degenerate from such high-born ugliness—the daughter-in-law was sick, and they say is not ugly, and has as good a set of teeth as one can have, when one has but two and those black. They seem to have no curiosity, sit where they are placed, and ask no questions about so strange a country. Indeed the embassadrefs could see nothing; for Doddington² stood before her the whole time, sweating Spanish at her, of which it was evident by her civil nods without answers she did not understand a word. She speaks bad French, danced a bad minuet, and went away—though there was a miraculous draught of fishes for their supper, as it was a fast—but being the octave of their fête-dieu, they dared not even fast plentifully. Miss Chud-

¹ A stay-maker of the time, who advertised in the newspapers making stays at such a price; "*tabby all over*." E.

² Afterwards lord Melcombe. He had been minister in Spain.

leigh desired the gamblers would go up into the garrets—"nay, they are not garrets—it is only the roof of the house hollowed for upper servants—but I have no upper servants." Every body ran up: there is a low gallery with bookcases, and four chambers practised under the pent of the roof, each hung with the finest Indian pictures on different colours, and with Chinese chairs of the same colours. Vases of flowers in each for nosegays, and in one retired nook a most critical couch!

The lord of the festival¹ was there, and seemed neither ashamed nor vain of the expence of his pleasures. At supper she offered him tokay, and told him she believed he would find it good. The supper was in two rooms and very fine, and on all the sideboards, and even on the chairs, were pyramids and troughs of strawberries and cherries; you would have thought she was kept by Vertumnus. Last night my lady Northumberland lighted up her garden for the Spaniards: I was not there, having excused myself for a head-ache, which I had not, but *ought* to have caught the night before. Mr. Doddington entertained these Fuentes's at Hammer-smith; and to the shame of our nation, while they were drinking tea in the summer-house, some gentlemen, aye, my lord, gentlemen, went into the river and showed the embassadress and her daughter more than ever they expected to see of England.

I dare say you are sorry for poor lady Anson. She was exceedingly good-humoured, and did a thousand good-natured and generous actions. I tell you nothing of the rupture of lord Halifax's match, of which you must have heard so much; but you will like a bon mot upon it—They say, the *hundreds of Drury* have got the better of the *thousands of Drury*².

The pretty countess³ is still alive, was thought actually dying on Tuesday night, and I think will go off very soon.

I think there will soon be a peace: my only reason is, that every body seems so backward at making war. Adieu, my dear lord!

I am your most affectionate servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ The duke of Kingston.

off was with a daughter of sir Thomas Drury,

² Lord Halifax kept an actress belonging to

an heiress.

Drury-lane theatre. And the marriage broken

³ Of Coventry.

LETTER X.

Strawberry-hill, August 7, 1760.

MY DEAR LORD,

YOU will laugh, but I am ready to cry, when I tell you that I have no notion when I shall be able to wait on you.—Such a calamity!—My tower is not fallen down, nor lady Fanny Shirley run away with another printer; nor has my lady D—— insisted on living with me as half way to Weybridge. Something more disgraceful than all these, and wofully mortifying for a young creature, who is at the same time in love with lady M—— C——, and following the duchess of G—— and Loo all over the kingdom. In short, my lord, I have got the gout—yes, the gout in earnest. I was seized on Monday morning, suffered dismally all night, am now wrapped in flannels like the picture of a Morocco ambassador, and am carried to bed by two servants. You see virtue and leanness are no preservatives. I write this now to your lordship, because I think it totally impossible that I should be able to set out the day after to-morrow, as I intended. The moment I can, I will; but this is a tyrant that will not let one name a day. All I know is, that it may abridge my other parties, but shall not my stay at Wentworth-castle. The duke of Devonshire was so good as to ask me to be at Chatsworth yesterday, but I did not know it time enough. As it happens, I must have disappointed him. At present I look like Pam's father more than one of his subjects; only one of my legs appears:

The rest my parti-colour'd robe conceals.

Adieu, my dear lord!

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XI.

Strawberry-hill, September 4, 1760.

MY DEAR LORD,

YOU ordered me to tell you how I liked Hardwicke. To say the truth, not exceedingly. The bank of oaks over the ponds is fine, and the vast lawn

lawn behind the house : I saw nothing else that is superior to the common run of parks. For the house, it did not please me at all ; there is no grace, no ornament, no gothic in it. I was glad to see the style of furniture of that age ; and my imagination helped me to like the apartment of the queen of Scots. Had it been the chateau of a duchess of Brunswic, on which they had exhausted the revenues of some centuries, I don't think I should have admired it at all. In short, Hardwicke disappointed me as much as Chatsworth surpassed my expectation. There is a richness and vivacity of prospect in the latter ; in the former, nothing but triste grandeur.

Newsteade delighted me. There is grace and gothic indeed—good chambers and a comfortable house. The monks formerly were the only sensible people that had really good mansions. I saw Althorpe too, and liked it very well : the pictures are fine. In the gallery I found myself quite at home ; and surprised the housekeeper by my familiarity with the portraits.

I hope you have read prince Ferdinand's Thanksgiving, where he has made out a victory by the excess of his praises. I supped at Mr. Conway's t'other night with miss West*, and we diverted ourselves with the encomiums on her colonel Johnston†. Lady A——— told her, that to be sure next winter she would burn nothing but laurel-faggots. Don't you like prince Ferdinand's being so tired with thanking, that at last he is forced to turn God over to be thanked by the officers ?

In London there is a more cruel campaign than that waged by the Russians : the streets are a very picture of the murder of the innocents—one drives over nothing but poor dead dogs ! The dear, good-natured, honest, sensible creatures ! Christ ! how can any body hurt them ? Nobody could but those Cherokees the English, who desire no better than to be halloo'd to blood :—one day admiral Byng, the next lord George Sackville, and to-day the poor dogs !

I cannot help telling your lordship how I was diverted the night I returned hither. I was sitting with Mrs. Clive, her sister and brother, in the

* Eldest daughter of John (afterwards) earl of De la Warre.

† The late general James Johnston.

bench near the road at the end of her long walk. We heard a violent scolding; and looking out, saw a pretty woman standing by a high chaise, in which was a young fellow, and a coachman riding by. The damsel had lost her hat, her cap, her cloak, her temper, and her senses; and was more drunk and more angry than you can conceive. Whatever the young man had or had not done to her, she would not ride in the chaise with him, but stood cursing and swearing in the most outrageous style: and when she had vented all the oaths she could think of, she at last wished *Perfidion* might seize him. You may imagine how we laughed.—The fair intoxicate turned round, and cried, “I am laughed at!—Who is it?—What, Mrs. Clive? Kitty Clive?—No: Kitty Clive would never behave so!”—I wish you could have seen my neighbour’s confusion.—She certainly did not grow paler than ordinary.—I laugh now while I repeat it to you.

I have told Mr. Bentley³ the great honour you have done him, my lord. He is happy the Temple succeeds to please you.

I am your lordship’s most faithful friend and servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XII.

Arlington-street, Oct. 26, 1760.

MY DEAR LORD,

I BEG your pardon for so long a silence in the late reign; I knew nothing worth telling you; and the great event of this morning you will certainly hear before it comes to you by so sober and regular a personage as the postman. The few circumstances known yet are, that the king went well to-bed last night; rose well at six this morning; went to the

³ Richard, only son of doctor Bentley.— ed by lord Strafford, after a design of Mr. Bentley’s. E.
The Gothic building like an old market-cross in
the Menagerie at Wentworth-castle was erect-

water-

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water-closet a little after seven; had a fit, fell against a bureau, and gashed his right temple: the valet-de-chambre heard a noise and a groan, and ran in: the king tried to speak, but died instantly. I should hope this would draw you southward: such scenes are worth looking at, even by people who regard them with such indifference as your lordship or I. I say no more, for what will mix in a letter with the death of a king?

I am my lady's and your lordship's most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XIII.

Strawberry-hill, July 5, 1761.

MY DEAR LORD,

I CANNOT live at Twickenham and not think of you; I have long wanted to write, and had nothing to tell you. My lady D. seems to have lost her sting; she has neither blown up a house nor a quarrel since you departed. Her wall, contiguous to you, is built, but so precipitate and flanting, that it seems hurrying to take water. I hear she grows sick of her undertakings. We have been ruined by deluges; all the country was under water. Lord Holderness's new fosse¹ was beaten in for several yards: this tempest was a little beyond the dew of Hermon, that fell on the *hill of Sion*. I have been in still more danger by water: my perroquet was on my shoulder as I was feeding my gold-fish, and flew into the middle of the pond: I was very near being the Nouvelle Eloise, and tumbling in after him; but with much ado I ferried him out with my hat.

Lord E—— has had a fit of apoplexy; your brother Charles² a bad return of his old complaint; and lord Melcombe has tumbled down the kitchen stairs, and—waked himself.

¹ At Sion-hill, near Brentford.

² Charles Townshend, married to lady Greenwich, eldest sister to lady Strafford.

London is a desert ; no soul in it but the king. Buffy has taken a temporary house. The World talks of peace—would I could believe it ! every newspaper frightens me : Mr. Conway would be very angry if he knew how I dread the very name of the prince de Soubise.

We begin to perceive the tower of Kew^{*} from Montpelier-row ; in a fortnight you will see it in Yorkshire.

The apostle Whitfield is come to some shame : he went to lady Huntingdon lately, and asked for forty pounds for some distressed faint or other. She said she had not so much money in the house, but would give it him the first time she had. He was very pressing, but in vain. At last he said, "There's your watch and trinkets, you don't want such vanities ; I will have that." She would have put him off ; but he persisting, she said, "Well, if you must have it, you must." About a fortnight afterwards, going to his house, and being carried into his wife's chamber, among the paraphernalia of the latter the countess found her own offering. This has made a terrible schism : she tells the story herself—I had not it from Saint Frances[†], but I hope it is true.

Adieu, my dear lord !

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. My gallery sends its humble duty to your new front, and all my creatures beg their respects to my lady.

LETTER XIV.

Strawberry-hill, July 22, 1761.

MY DEAR LORD,

I LOVE to be able to contribute to your satisfaction, and I think few things would make you happier than to hear that we have totally defeated

^{*} The pagoda in the royal garden at Kew.

[†] Lady Frances Shirley.

the French combined armies, and that Mr. Conway is safe. The account came this morning: I had a short note from poor lady A——, who was waked with the good news, before she had heard there had been a battle. I don't pretend to send you circumstances, no more than I do of the wedding and coronation, because you have relations and friends in town nearer and better informed. Indeed, only the blossom of victory is come yet.—Fitzroy is expected, and another fuller courier after him. Lord Granby, to the mob's heart's content, has the chief honour of the day—rather, of the two days. The French behaved to the mob's content too, that is, shamefully. And all this glory cheaply bought on our side. Lieutenant-colonel Keith killed; and colonel Marlay and Harry Townshend wounded. If it produces a peace, I shall be happy for mankind—if not, shall content myself with the single but pure joy of Mr. Conway's being safe.

Well! my lord, when do you come? You don't like the question, but kings will be married and must be crowned—and if people will be earls, they must now and then give up castles and new fronts, for processions and ermine. By the way, the number of peeresses that propose to excuse themselves makes great noise; especially as so many are breeding, or trying to breed, by commoners, that they cannot walk. I hear that my lord D——, concluding all women would not dislike the ceremony, is negotiating his peerage in the city, and trying if any great fortune will give fifty thousand pounds for one day, as they often do for one night. I saw miss —— this evening at my lady Suffolk's, and fancy she does not think my lord —— quite so ugly as she did two months ago.

Adieu, my lord! This is a splendid year!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XV.

Arlington-street, Tuesday morning.

MY DEAR LORD,

NOTHING was ever equal to the bustle and uncertainty of the town for these three days. The queen was seen off the coast of Sussex on Saturday

Saturday last, and is not arrived yet—nay, last night at ten o'clock it was neither certain when she landed, nor when she would be in town. I forgive history for knowing nothing, when so public an event as the arrival of a new queen is a mystery even at the very moment in St. James's-street. The messenger that brought the letter yesterday morning, said, she *arrived* at half an hour after four at Harwich. This was immediately translated into *landing*, and notified in those words to the ministers. Six hours afterwards it proved no such thing, and that she was only in Harwich-road; and they recollected that *half an hour after four* happens twice in twenty-four hours, and the letter did not specify which of the *twices* it was. Well! the bridemaids whipped on their virginity; the new road and the parks were thronged; the guns were choaking with impatience to go off; and sir James Lowther, who was to pledge his majesty, was actually married to lady Mary Stuart. Five, six, seven, eight o'clock came, and no queen—She lay at Witham at lord Abercorn's, who was most tranquilly in town; and it is not certain even whether she will be composed enough to be in town to-night. She has been sick but half an hour; sung and played on the harpsichord all the voyage, and been cheerful the whole time. The coronation will now certainly not be put off—so I shall have the pleasure of seeing you on the 15th. The weather is close and sultry; and if the wedding is to-night, we shall all die.

They have made an admirable speech for the Tripoline ambassador—that he said he heard the king had sent his *first eunuch* to fetch the princess. I should think he meant lord —.

You will find the town over head and ears in disputes about rank, precedence, processions, entrées, &c. One point, that of the Irish peers, has been excellently liquidated: lord Halifax has stuck up a paper in the coffee-room at Arthur's, importing, "that his majesty, not having leisure to determine a point of such great consequence, permits for this time such Irish peers as shall be at the marriage to walk in the procession." Every body concludes those personages will understand this order, as it is drawn up in their *own* language; otherwise it is not very clear how they are to walk *to* the marriage, if they are *at* it before they come *to* it.

Strawberry returns its duty and thanks for all your lordship's goodness to
M m m 2 it,

it, and, though it has not got its wedding-clothes yet, will be happy to see you. Lady B—— M—— is the individual woman she was—she seems to have been gone three years, like the sultan in the Persian tales, who popped his head into a tub of water, pulled it up again, and fancied he had been a dozen years in bondage in the interim. She is not altered in a tittle. Adieu, my dear lord!

Your most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Twenty minutes past three in the afternoon, not in the middle of the night.

MADAME CHARLOTTE is this instant arrived. The noise of coaches, chaises, horsemen, mob, that have been to see her pass through the parks, is so prodigious that I cannot distinguish the guns. I am going to be dressed, and before seven shall launch into the crowd. Pray for me!

LETTER XVI.

Strawberry-hill, August 5, 1762.

MY DEAR LORD,

AS you have correspondents of better authority in town, I don't pretend to send you great events, and I know no small ones. Nobody talks of any thing under a revolution. That in Russia alarms me, lest lady —— should fall in love with the czarina, who has deposed *her* lord ——, and set out for Peterburgh. We throw away a whole summer in writing Britons and North Britons; the Russians change sovereigns faster than Mr. Wilkes can choose a motto for a paper. What years were spent here in controversy on the abdication of king James, and the legitimacy of the pretender! Commend me to the czarina. They doubted, that is, her husband did, whether her children were of genuine blood-royal. She appealed to the Preobazinsky guards, excellent casuists, and, to prove duke Paul heir to the crown, assumed it herself. The proof was compendious and unanswerable.

I trust you know that Mr. Conway has made a figure by taking the castle of

of Waldeck. There has been another action to prince Ferdinand's advantage, but no English were engaged.

You tantalise me by talking of the verdure of Yorkshire; we have not had a tea-cup full of rain till to-day for these six weeks. Corn has been reaped that never wet its lips; not a blade of grass; the leaves yellow and falling as in the end of October. In short, Twickenham is rueful; I don't believe Westphalia looks more barren. Nay, we are forced to fortify ourselves too. Hanworth was broken open last night, though the family was all there. Lord Vere lost a silver standish, an old watch, and his writing-box with fifty pounds in it. They broke it open in the park, but missed a diamond ring, which was found, and the telescope, which by the weight of the case they had fancied full of money. Another house in the middle of Sunbury has had the same fate. I am mounting cannon on my battlements.

Your chateau, I hope, proceeds faster than mine. The carpenters are all associated for increase of wages; I have had but two men at work these five weeks. You know, to be sure, that lady Mary Wortley cannot live. Adieu, my dear lord!

Your most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R XVII.

Strawberry-hill, August 10, 1763.

MY DEAR LORD,

I HAVE waited in hopes that the world would do something worth telling you: it will not, and I cannot stay any longer without asking you how you do, and hoping you have not quite forgot me. It has rained such deluges, that I had some thoughts of turning my gallery into an ark, and began to pack up a pair of bantams, a pair of cats, in short, a pair of every living creature about my house: but it is grown fine at last, and the workmen quit my gallery to-day without hoisting a sail in it. I know nothing upon earth but what the ancient ladies in my neighbourhood knew three-score years ago; I write merely to pay you my pepper-corn of affection,
and

and to enquire after my lady, who I hope is perfectly well. A longer letter would not have half the merit: a line in return will however repay all the merit I can possibly have to one to whom I am so much obliged.

I am, my dear lord, your most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVIII.

Arlington-street, September 3, 1765.

MY DEAR LORD,

I CANNOT quit a country where I leave any thing that I honour so much as your lordship and lady Strafford, without taking a sort of leave of you. I shall set out for Paris on Monday next the 9th, and shall be happy if I can execute any commission for you there.

A journey to Paris sounds youthful and healthy. I have certainly mended much this last week, though with no pretensions to a recovery of youth. Half the view of my journey is to re-establish my health—the other half, to wash my hands of politics, which I have long determined to do whenever a change should happen. I would not abandon my friends while they were martyrs; but now they have gained their crown of glory, they are well able to shift for themselves; and it was no part of my compact to go to that heaven, St. James's, with them. Unless I dislike Paris very much, I shall stay some time; but I make no declarations, lest I should be soon tired of it, and come back again. At first I must like it, for lady M—— C—— will be there, as if by assignation. The countesses of Carlisle and Berkeley too, I hear, will set up their staves there for some time; but as my heart is faithful to lady M——, they would not charm me if they were forty times more disposed to it.

The emperor is dead—but so are all the Maximilians and Leopolds his predecessors, and with no more influence on the present state of things. The
empress

emprefs dowager queen will still be mafter—unless ſhe marries an Iriſhman, as I wiſh with all my ſoul ſhe may.

The duke^{*} and duchefs of Richmond will follow me in about a fortnight: lord and lady George Lenox go with them; and ſir Charles Bunbury and lady Sarah are to be at Paris too for ſome time: ſo the Engliſh court there will be very juvenile and blooming. This ſet is rather younger than the dowagers with whom I paſs ſo much of my ſummers and autumns; but this is to be my laſt ſally into the world; and when I return, I intend to be as ſober as my cat, and purr quietly in my own chimney corner.

Adieu, my dear lord! May every happineſs attend you both, and may I paſs ſome agreeable days next ſummer with you at Wentworth-caſtle!

Your moſt devoted and faithful ſervant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XIX.

Strawberry-hill, July 29, 1767.

MY DEAR LORD,

I AM very ſorry that I muſt ſpeak of a loſs that will give you and lady Strafford concern; an eſſential loſs to me, who am deprived of a moſt agreeable friend, with whom I paſſed here many hours. I need not ſay I mean poor lady Suffolk[†]. I was with her two hours on Saturday night; and indeed found her much changed, though I did not apprehend her in danger. I was going to ſay ſhe complained—but you know ſhe never did complain—of the gout and rheumatism all over her, particularly in her face. It was a cold night, and ſhe ſat below ſtairs when ſhe ſhould have been in

^{*} Appointed embaffador to Paris.

[†] Henrietta Hobart counteſs of Suffolk. For a further account of her ſee the Reminiſcences. E.

bed;

bed; and I doubt this want of care was prejudicial. I sent next morning. She had a bad night; but grew much better in the evening. Lady Dalkeith came to her; and when she was gone, lady Suffolk said to lord Chetwynd, She would eat her supper in her bed-chamber. He went up with her, and thought the appearances promised a good night: but she was scarce sat down in her chair, before she pressed her hand to her side, and died in half an hour.

I believe both your lordship and lady Strafford will be surprised to hear that she was by no means in the situation that most people thought. Lord Chetwynd and myself were the only persons at all acquainted with her affairs, and they were far from being even easy to her. It is due to her memory to say, that I never saw more strict honour and justice. She bore *knowingly* the imputation of being covetous, at a time that the strictest œconomy could by no means prevent her exceeding her income considerably. The anguish of the last years of her life, though concealed, flowed from the apprehension of not satisfying her few wishes, which were, not to be in debt, and to make a provision for miss H——. I can give your lordship strong instances of the sacrifices she tried to make to her principles. I have not yet heard if her will is opened; but it will surprise those who thought her rich. Lord Chetwynd's friendship to her has been unalterably kind and zealous, and is not ceased. He stays in the house with miss H—— till some of her family come to take her away. I have perhaps dwelt too long on this subject; but as it was not permitted me to do her justice when alive, I own I cannot help wishing that those who had a regard for her, may now at least know how much more she deserved it than even they suspected. In truth, I never knew a woman more respectable for her honour and principles, and have lost few persons in my life whom I shall miss so much.

I am, my dear lord, yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* Her great-niece.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

Strawberry-hill, June 25, 1768.

YOU ordered me, my dear lord, to write to you, and I am always ready to obey you, and to give you every proof of attachment in my power : but it is a very barren season for all but cabalists, who can compound, divide, multiply N° 45 forty-five thousand different ways. I saw in the papers to-day, that somehow or other this famous number and the number of the beast in the Revelations is the same—an observation from which different persons will draw various conclusions. For my part, who have no ill wishes to Wilkes, I wish he was in Patmos or the New Jerusalem, for I am exceedingly tired of his name. The only good thing I have heard in all this controversy was of a man who began his letter thus : “ I take the Wilkes-and-liberty to assure you, &c.”

I peeped at London last week, and found a tolerably full opera. But now the Birth-day is over, I suppose every body will go to waters and races till his majesty of Denmark arrives. He is extremely amorous ; but stays so short a time, that the ladies who intend to be undone must not haggle. They must do their business in the twinkling of an allemande, or he will be flown. Don't you think he will be a little surprised, when he inquires for the seraglio in B——house, to find, in full of all accounts, two old *Mecklenburgheresses* ?

Is it true that —— is turned methodist ? It will be a great acquisition to the sect to have their hymns set by Giardini. Pope Joan Huntingdon will be deposed, if the husband becomes first minister. I doubt too the saints will like to call at Canterbury and Winchester in their way to Heaven. My charity is so small, that I do not think their virtue a jot more obdurate than that of patriots.

We have had some severe rain ; but the season is now beautiful, though scarce hot. The hay and the corn promise that we shall have no riots on their account. Those black dogs the whiteboys or coal-heavers are dispersed or taken ; and I really see no reason to think we shall have another rebellion this fortnight. The most comfortable event to me is, that we shall have no civil war all the summer at Brentford. I dreaded two kings there ;

but the writ for Middlesex will not be issued till the parliament meets; so there will be no pretender against king Glynn¹. As I love peace, and have done with politics, I quietly acknowledge the king de facto; and hope to pass and repass unmolested through his majesty's *long, lazy, lousy* capital².

My humble duty to my lady Strafford and all her pheasants. I have just made two cascades; but my naiads are fools to Mrs. C—— or my lady S——, and don't give me a gallon of water in a week.—Well, this is a very silly letter! But you must take the will for the deed. Adieu, my dear lord!

Your most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXI.

Strawberry-hill, August 16, 1768.

AS you have been so good, my dear lord, as twice to take notice of my letter, I am bound in conscience and gratitude to try to amuse you with any thing new. A royal visitor, quite fresh, is a real curiosity—by the reception of him, I do not think many more of the breed will come hither. He came from Dover in hackney-chaises; for somehow or other the master of the horse happened to be in Lincolnshire; and the king's coaches having received no orders, were too good subjects to go and fetch a stranger king of their own heads. However, as his Danish majesty travels to improve himself for the good of his people, he will go back extremely enlightened in the arts of government and morality, by having learned that crowned heads may be reduced to ride in a hired chaise.

By another mistake, king George happened to go to Richmond about an hour before king Christiern arrived in London. An hour is exceedingly long; and the distance to Richmond still longer: so with all the dispatch that could possibly be made, king George could not get back to his capital till next day at noon. Then, as the road from his closet at St. James's to the king of Denmark's apartment on t'other side of the palace is about

¹ Serjeant Glynn, member of parliament for Middlesex.

² Brentford.

thirty miles, which posterity, having no conception of the prodigious extent and magnificence of St. James's, will never believe, it was half an hour after three before his Danish majesty's courier could go, and return to let him know that his good brother and ally was leaving the palace in which they both were, in order to receive him at the queen's palace, which you know is about a million of snail's paces from St. James's. Notwithstanding these difficulties and unavoidable delays, Woden, Thor, Friga, and all the gods that watch over the kings of the North, did bring these two invincible monarchs to each other's embraces about half an hour after five that same evening. They passed an hour in projecting a family compact that will regulate the destiny of Europe to latest posterity: and then, the Fates so willing it, the British prince departed for Richmond, and the Danish potentate repaired to the widowed mansion of his royal mother-in-law, where he poured forth the fullness of his heart in praises on the lovely bride she had bestowed on him, from whom nothing but the benefit of his subjects could ever have torn him.—And here let calumny blush, who has aspersed so chaste and faithful a monarch with low amours; pretending that he has raised to the honour of a feat in his sublime council, an artisan of Hamburgh, known only by repairing the soles of buskins, because that mechanic would, on no other terms, consent to his fair daughter's being honoured with majestic embraces. So victorious over his passions is this young Scipio from the pole, that though on Shooter's-hill he fell into an ambush laid for him by an illustrious countess, of blood-royal herself, his majesty, after descending from his car, and courteously greeting her, again mounted his vehicle, without being one moment eclipsed from the eyes of the surrounding multitude.—Oh! mercy on me! I am out of breath—Pray let me descend from my stilts, or I shall send you as fustian and tedious a history as that of Henry II.—Well then, this great king is a very little one; not ugly, nor ill-made. He has the sublime strut of his grandfather, or of a cock-sparrow; and the divine white eyes of all his family by the mother's side. His curiosity seems to have consisted in the original plan of travelling, for I cannot say he takes notice of any thing in particular. His manner is cold and dignified, but very civil and gracious and proper. The mob adore him and huzza him; and so they did the first instant. At present they begin to know why—for he flings money to them out of his windows; and by the end of the week I do not doubt but they will want to choose him for Middlesex. His court is extremely well ordered; for they

bow as low to him at every word as if his name was Sultan Amurat. You would take his first minister for only the first of his slaves.—I hope this example, which they have been so good as to exhibit at the opera, will contribute to civilise us. There is indeed a pert young gentleman, who a little discomposes this august ceremonial. His name is count Holke, his age three-and-twenty; and his post answers to one that we had formerly in England, many ages ago, and which in our tongue was called the lord high favourite. Before the Danish monarchs became absolute, the most refractory of that country used to write libels, called *North Danes*, against this great officer; but that practice has long since ceased. Count Holke seems rather proud of his favour, than shy of displaying it.

End of Volume the first.

I hope, my dear lord, you will be content with my Danish politics, for I trouble myself with no other. There is a long history about the baron de Bottetourt, and sir Jeffery Amherst, who has resigned his regiment; but it is nothing to me, nor do I care a straw about it. I am deep in the anecdotes of the new court; and if you want to know more of count Holke or count Molke, or the grand vizier Bernsdorff, or mynheer Schimmelman, apply to me and you shall be satisfied.—But what do I talk of? You will see them yourself. Minerva, in the shape of count Bernsdorff, or out of all shape in the person of the duchess of —, is to conduct Telemachus to York races; for can a monarch be perfectly accomplished in the mysteries of kingcraft, as our Solomon James I. called it, unless he is initiated in the arts of jockeyship? When this northern star travels towards its own sphere, lord Hertford will go to Ragley. I shall go with him; and if I can avoid running foul of the Magi that will be thronging from all parts to worship that star, I will endeavour to call at Wentworth castle for a day or two, if it will not be inconvenient. I should think it would be about the second week in September; but your lordship shall hear again, unless you should forbid me, who am ever

Lady Strafford's and your lordship's most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXII.

Strawberry-hill, Monday October 10, 1768.

I GIVE you a thousand thanks, my dear lord, for the account of the ball at Welbeck. I shall not be able to repay it with a relation of the masquerade to-night; for I have been confined here this week with the gout in my foot, and have not stirred off my bed or couch since Tuesday. I was to have gone to the great ball at Sion^{*} on Friday, for which a new road, paddock and bridge were made, as other folks make a dessert. I conclude lady Mary[†] has and will tell you of all these pomps, which health thinks so serious, and sickness with her grave face tells one are so idle. Sickness may make me moralize, but I assure you she does not want humour. She has diverted me extremely with drawing a comparison between the repose (to call neglect by its dignified name) which I have enjoyed in this fit, and the great anxiety in which the whole world was when I had the last gout three years ago—You remember my friends were then coming into power. Lord W—— was so good as to call at least once every day, and enquire after me; and the foreign ministers insisted that I should give them the satisfaction of seeing me, that they might tranquillize their sovereigns with the certainty of my not being in any danger. The duke and duchess of Newcastle were so kind, though very nervous themselves, as to send messengers and long messages every day from Claremont. I cannot say this fit has alarmed Europe quite so much. I heard the bell ring at the gate, and asked with much majesty if it was the duke of Newcastle had sent? No, sir, it was only the butcher's boy. The butcher's boy is indeed the only courier I have had. Neither the king of France nor king of Spain appears to be under the least concern about me.

My dear lord, I have had so many of these transitions in my life, that you will not wonder they divert me more than a masquerade. I am ready to say to most people, "Mask, I know you."—I wish I might choose their dresses!

^{*} The villa of the duke of Northumberland near Brentford.

[†] Lady Mary Coke, sister to lady Strafford.

When

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When I have the honour of seeing lady Strafford, I shall beseech her to tell me all the news; for I am too nigh and too far to know any. Adieu, my dear lord!

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXIII.

Arlington-street, July 3, 1769.

WHEN you have been so constantly good to me, my dear lord, without changing, do you wonder that our friendship has lasted so long? Can I be insensible to the honour or pleasure of your acquaintance? When the advantage lies so much on my side, am I likely to alter the first? Oh, but it will last now! We have seen friendships without number born and die. Ours was not formed on interest, nor alliance; and politics, the poison of all English connections, never entered into ours. You have given me a new proof by remembering the chapel of Luton. I hear it is to be preserved; and am glad of it, though I might have been the better for its ruins.

I should have answered your lordship's last post, but was at Park-place. I think lady A—— quite recovered; though her illness has made such an impression that she does not yet believe it.

It is so settled that we are never to have tolerable weather in June, that the first hot day was on Saturday—hot by comparison; for I think it is three years since we have really felt the feel of summer. I was, however, concerned to be forced to come to town yesterday on some business; for, however the country feels, it looks divine, and the verdure we buy so dear is delicious. I shall not be able, I fear, to profit of it this summer in the loveliest of all places, as I am to go to Paris in August. But next year I trust I shall accompany Mr. Conway and lady A—— to Wentworth-castle. I shall be glad to visit Castle Howard and Beverley; but neither would carry me so far, if Wentworth-castle was not in the way.

The

The Chatelets are gone, without any more battles with the Russians¹. The papers say the latter have been beaten by the Turks; which rejoices me, though against all rules of politics: but I detest that murderers, and like to have her humbled. I don't know that this piece of news is true: it is enough to me that it is agreeable. I had rather take it for granted, than be at the trouble of enquiring about what I have so little to do with. I am just the same about the City and Surrey petitions. Since I have *dismembered*² myself, it is incredible how cool I am to all politics.

London is the abomination of desolation; and I rejoice to leave it again this evening. Even Pam has not a levée above once or twice a week. Next winter I suppose it will begin to be a fashion to remove into the city; for, since it is the mode to choose aldermen at this end of the town, the macaronis will certainly adjourn to Bishopsgate-street, for fear of being fined for sheriffs. Mr. J—— and Mr. B—— will die of the thought of being aldermen of Grosvenor-ward and Berkeley-square-ward. Adam and Eve in their paradise laugh at all these tumults, and have not tasted of the tree that forfeits paradise; which I take to have been the tree of politics, not of knowledge. How happy you are not to have your son, Abel knocked on the head by his brother Cain at the Brentford election! You do not hunt the poor deer and hares that gambol around you.—If Eve has a fin, I doubt it is angling; but as she makes all other creatures happy, I beg she would not impale worms nor whisk carp out of one element into another. If she repents of that guilt, I hope she will live as long as her grandson Methuselah. There is a commentator that says *his* life was protracted for never having boiled a lobster alive. Adieu, dear couple, that I honour as much as I could honour my first grandfather and grandmother!

Your most dutiful

HOR. JAPHET.

¹ The duc de Chatelet, the French ambassador, had affronted comte Czernicheff the Russian ambassador at a ball at court for precedence; and a challenge ensued: but their meeting was prevented. E.

² Mr. Walpole means, since he quitted parliament.

LETTER XXIV.

Paris, September 8, 1769.

THE OTHER night at the duchess of Choiseul's at supper the intendant of Rouen asked me, if we have roads of communication all over England and Scotland?—I suppose he thinks that in general we inhabit trackless forests and wild mountains, and that once a year a few legislators come to Paris to learn the arts of civil life, as to sow corn, plant vines, and make operas. If this letter should contrive to scramble through that *desert* Yorkshire, where your lordship has *attempted* to improve a dreary hill and uncultivated vale, you will find I remember your commands of writing from this capital of the world, whither I am come for the benefit of my country, and where I am intensely studying those laws and that beautiful frame of government, which can alone render a nation happy, great and flourishing; where lettres de cachet soften manners, and a proper distribution of luxury and beggary ensures a common felicity. As we have a prodigious number of students in legislature of both sexes here at present, I will not anticipate their discoveries; but, as your particular friend, will communicate a rare improvement on nature, which these great philosophers have made, and which would add considerable beauties to those parts which your lordship has already recovered from the waste, and taught to look a little like a christian country. The secret is very simple, and yet demanded the effort of a mighty genius to strike it out. It is nothing but this: Trees ought to be educated as much as men, and are strange awkward productions when not taught to hold themselves upright or bow on proper occasions. The academy de belles lettres have even offered a prize for the man that shall recover the long lost art of an ancient Greek, called *le sieur Orphée*, who instituted a dancing-school for plants, and gave a magnificent ball on the birth of the dauphin of Thrace, which was performed entirely by forest trees. In this whole kingdom there is no such thing as seeing a tree that is not well behaved. They are first stripped up and then cut down; and you would as soon meet a man with his hair about his ears as an oak or ash. As the weather is very hot now, and the foil chalk, and the dust white, I assure you it is very difficult, powdered as both are all over, to distinguish a tree from a hair-dresser. Lest this should sound like a travelling hyperbole, I must advertise your lordship, that there is
little

little difference in their heights; for a tree of thirty years growth being liable to be marked as royal timber, the proprietors take care not to let their trees live to the age of being enlisted, but burn them, and plant others as often almost as they change their fashions. This gives an air of perpetual youth to the face of the country, and if adopted by us would realize Mr. Addison's visions, and

Make our bleak rocks and barren mountains smile.

What other remarks I have made in my indefatigable search after knowledge must be reserved to a future opportunity; but as your lordship is my friend, I may venture to say without vanity to you, that Solon nor any of the ancient philosophers who travelled to Egypt in quest of religions, mysteries, laws and fables, ever sat up so late with the ladies and priests and *presidents de parlement* at Memphis, as I do here—and consequently were not half so well qualified as I am to new model a commonwealth. I have learned how to make remonstrances, and how to answer them. The latter, it seems, is a science much wanted in my own country—and yet is as easy and obvious as their treatment of trees, and not very unlike it. It was delivered many years ago in an oracular sentence of my namesake—

Odi profanum vulgus, & arceo.

You must drive away the vulgar, and you must have an hundred and fifty thousand men to drive them away with—that is all. I do not wonder the intendant of Rouen thinks we are still in a state of barbarism, when we are ignorant of the very rudiments of government.

The duke and duchess of Richmond have been here a few days, and are gone to Aubigné. I do not think him at all well, and am exceedingly concerned for it, as I know no man who has more estimable qualities. They return by the end of the month. I am fluctuating whether I shall not return with them, as they have pressed me to do, through Holland. I never was there, and could never go so agreeably; but then it would protract my ab-

* Alluding to the number of remonstrances many other corporate bodies, on the subject of under the name of petitions, which were presented this year from the livery of London and the Middlesex election. E.

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sence three weeks, and I am impatient to be in my own cave, notwithstanding the wisdom I imbibe every day. But one cannot sacrifice one's self wholly to the public: Titus and Wilkes have now and then lost a day. Adieu, my dear lord! Be assured that I shall not disdain yours and lady Strafford's conversation, though you have nothing but the goodness of your hearts, and the simplicity of your manners, to recommend you to the more enlightened understanding of

Your old friend,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXV.

Strawberry-hill, July 9, 1770.

I AM not going to tell you, my dear lord, of the diversions or honours¹ of Stowe, which I conclude lady Mary has writ to lady Strafford. Though the week passed cheerfully enough, it was more glory than I should have fought of my own head. The journeys to Stowe and Park-place have deranged my projects so that I don't know where I am, and I wish they have not given me the gout into the bargain; for I am come back very lame, and not at all with the bloom that one ought to have imported from the Elysian-fields². Such jaunts when one is growing old is playing with edged-tools, as my lord Chesterfield, in one of his Worlds, makes the husband say to his wife, when she pretends that grey powder does not become her. It is charming at twenty to play at Elysian-fields, but it is no joke at fifty; or too great a joke. It made me laugh as we were descending the great flight of steps from the house to go and sup in the grotto on the banks of Helicon: we were so cloaked up, for the evening was very cold, and so many of us were limping and hobbling, that Charon would have easily believed we were going to ferry over in earnest. It is with much more comfort that I am writing to your lordship in the great bow window of my new round room, which collects all the rays of the south-west sun, and composes a sort of summer; a feel I have not known this year, except last Thursday. If the rains should ever cease, and the weather settle to fine, I shall pay you my visit at Wentworth-castle; but hitherto the damps

¹ Princess Amelia was there.

² At Stowe.

have

have affected me so much, that I am more disposed to return to London and light my fire, than brave the humours of a climate so capricious and uncertain, in the country. I cannot help thinking it grows worse: I certainly remember such a thing as dust; nay, I still have a clear idea of it, though I have seen none for some years, and should put some grains in a bottle for a curiosity, if it should ever fly again.

News I know none. You may be sure it was a subject carefully avoided at Stowe; and Beckford's death had not raised the glass or spirits of the master of the house. The papers make one sick with talking of that noisy vapouring fool, as they would of Algernon Sidney.

I have not happened to see your future¹ nephew, though we have exchanged visits. It was the first time I had been at Marble-hill, since poor lady Suffolk's death; and the impression was so uneasy, that I was not sorry not to find him at home. Adieu, my good lord! Except seeing you both, nothing can be more agreeable than to hear of yours and lady Strafford's health, who, I hope, continues perfectly well.

Your most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXVI.

Arlington-street, October 16, 1770.

THOUGH I have so very little to say, it is but my duty, my dear lord, to thank you for your extreme goodness to me and your inquiring after me. I was very bad again last week, but have mended so much since Friday night, that I really now believe the fit is over. I came to town on Sunday, and can creep about my room even without a stick, which is more felicity to me than if I had got a white one. I do not aim yet at such preferment as walking up stairs; but having moulted my stick, I flatter myself I shall come forth again without being lame.

¹ John, second earl of Buckingham, married to his second wife a daughter of lady Anne Connolly, sister of lord Strafford.

The few I have seen tell me there is nobody else in town. That is no grievance to me, when I should be at the mercy of all that should please to bestow their idle time upon me. I know nothing of the war-egg¹, but that sometimes it is to be hatched, and sometimes to be addled. Many folks get into the nest and sit as hard upon it as they can, concluding it will produce a golden chick. As I shall not be a feather the better for it, I hate that game-breed, and prefer the old hen Peace and her dunghill brood. My compliments to my lady and all her poultry.

I am, my dear lord,

Your infinitely obliged and faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXVII.

Strawberry-hill, June 20, 1771.

I HAVE waited impatiently, my dear lord, for something worth putting into a letter; but trees do not speak in parliament, nor flowers write in the newspapers; and they are almost the only beings I have seen. I dined on Tuesday at Notting-hill² with the countesses of Powis and Holderness, lord and lady Pelham, and lord Frederic Cavendish—and Pam; and shall go to town on Friday to meet the same company at lady Holderness's; and this short journal comprises almost my whole history and knowledge.

I must now ask your lordship's and lady Strafford's commands for Paris. I shall set out on the seventh of next month. You will think, though you will not tell me so, that these are very juvenile jaunts at my age. Indeed I should be ashamed if I went for any other pleasure but that of once more seeing my dear blind friend³, whose much greater age forbids my depending on seeing her often. It will indeed be amusing to change the scene of politics; for though I have done with our own, one cannot help hearing them

¹ Alluding to the dispute with Spain about the affair of Falkland island. E.

² The villa of lady Mary Coke near Kensington.

³ Madame du Deffand.

—nay reading them ; for, like flies, they come to breakfast with one's bread and butter. I wish there was any other vehicle for them but a newspaper ; a place into which, considering how they are exhausted, I am sure they have no pretensions. The duc d'Aiguillon I hear is minister. Their politics, some way or other, must end seriously, either in despotism, a civil war, or assassination. Methinks it is playing deep for the power of tyranny. C—— F—— is more moderate : he only games for an hundred thousand pounds that he has not.

Have you read the Life of Benvenuto Cellini, my lord ? I am angry with him for being more distracted and wrong-headed than my lord Herbert. Till the revival of these two, I thought the present age had borne the palm of absurdity from all its predecessors. But I find our contemporaries are quiet good folks, that only game till they hang themselves, and do not kill every body they meet in the street. Who would have thought we were so reasonable ?

Ranelagh, they tell me, is full of foreign dukes. There is a duc de la Tremouille, a duc d'Arenberg, and other grandees. I know the former, and am not sorry to be out of his way.

It is not pleasant to leave groves and lawns and rivers for a dirty town with a dirtier ditch, calling itself the Seine ; but I dare not encounter the sea and bad inns in cold weather. This consideration will bring me back by the end of August. I should be happy to execute any commission for your lordship. You know how earnestly I wish always to show myself

Your lordship's most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXVIII.

Paris, August 25, 1771.

I HAVE passed my biennial six weeks here, my dear lord, and am preparing to return as soon as the weather will allow me. It is some comfort
to

to the patriot-virtue, envy, to find this climate worse than our own. There were four very hot days at the end of last month, which you know with us northern people compose a summer: it has rained half this, and for these three days there has been a deluge, a storm, and extreme cold. Yet these folks shiver in silk, and sit with their windows open till supper-time.—Indeed, firing is very dear, and nabobs very scarce. Oeconomy and retrenchment are the words in fashion, and are founded in a little more than caprice. I have heard no instance of luxury but in mademoiselle Guimard, a favourite dancer, who is building a palace: round the *sale à manger* there are windows that open upon hot-houses, that are to produce flowers all winter.—That is worthy of ——. There is a finer dancer whom Mr. H—— is to transplant to London; a mademoiselle Heinel or Ingle, a Fleming. She is tall, perfectly made, very handsome, and has a set of attitudes copied from the classics. She moves as gracefully slow as Pygmalion's statue when it was coming to life, and moves her leg round as imperceptibly as if she was dancing in the zodiac.—But she is not Virgo.

They make no more of breaking parliaments here than an English mob does of breaking windows. It is pity people are so ill-sorted. If this king and ours could cross over and figure in, Louis XV. would dissolve our parliament if Polly Jones did but say a word to him. They have got into such a habit of it here, that you would think a parliament was a polypus: they cut it in two, and by next morning half of it becomes a whole assembly. This has literally been the case at Besançon. Lord and lady Barrymore, who are in the highest favour at Compiègne, will be able to carry over the receipt.

Every body feels in their own way. My grief is to see the ruinous condition of the palaces and pictures. I was yesterday at the Louvre. Le Brun's noble gallery, where the battles of Alexander are, and of which he designed the ceiling, and even the shutters, bolts and locks, is in a worse condition than the old gallery at Somerset-house. It rains in upon the pictures, though there are stores of much more valuable pieces than those of Le Brun. Heaps of glorious works by Raphael and all the great masters are piled up and equally neglected at Versailles. Their care is not less destructive in private houses. The duke of Orleans's pictures and the prince of Monaco's have been cleaned, and varnished so thick that
you

you may see your face in them; and some of them have been transported from board to cloth, bit by bit, and the seams filled up with colour; so that in ten years they will not be worth sixpence. It makes me as peevish as if I was posterity! I hope your lordship's works will last longer than these of Louis XIV. The glories of his *siècle* hasten fast to their end, and little will remain but those of his authors.

I am, my dear lord,

Your most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXIX.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 24, 1773.

THE multiplicity of business which I found chalked out to me by my journey to Houghton, has engaged me so much, my dear lord, and the unpleasant scene opened to me there struck me so deeply, that I have neither had time nor cheerfulness enough to flatter myself I could amuse my friends by my letters. Except the pictures, I found every thing worse than I expected, and the prospect almost too bad to give me courage to pursue what I am doing. I am totally ignorant in most of the branches of business that are fallen to my lot, and not young enough to learn any new lesson well. All I can hope is to clear the worst part of the way; for in undertaking to retrieve an estate, the beginning is certainly the most difficult of the work. It is fathoming a chaos. But I will not unfold a confusion to your lordship which your good sense will always keep you from experiencing—very unfashionably; for the first geniuses of this age hold, that the best method of governing the world is to throw it into disorder. The experiment is not yet complete, as the re-arrangement is still to come.

I am very seriously glad of the birth of your nephew¹, my lord. I am going this evening with my congratulations; but have been so much absent, and

¹ A son of John earl of Buckingham's, who died young.

so hurried, that I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing lady Anne¹, though I have called twice. To Gunnersbury I have had no summons this summer: I receive such honours, or the want of them, with proper respect. Lady —, I fear, is in chace of a *Dulcineus* that she will never meet. When the ardour of peregrination is a little abated, will not she probably give into a more comfortable pursuit; and, like a print I have seen of the blessed martyr Charles I. abandon the hunt of a *corruptible* for that of an *incorruptible crown*? There is another beatific print just published in that style: it is of lady Huntingdon. With much pompous humility, she looks like an old basket-woman trampling on her coronet at the mouth of a cavern.—Poor Whitfield! If he was forced to do the honours of the *spelunca*!—Saint Fanny Shirley is nearer consecration. I was told two days ago that she had written a letter to lady Selina that was not intelligible. Her grace of Kingston's glory approaches to consummation in a more worldly style. The duke is dying, and has given her the whole estate, 17,000 *l.* a year. I am told she has already notified the contents of the will, and made offers of the sale of Thoresby. Pious matrons have various ways of expressing decency.

Your lordship's new bow-window thrives.—I do not want it to remind me of its master and mistress, to whom

I am ever the most devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXX.

Arlington-street, Nov. 15, 1773.

I AM very sorry, my dear lord, that you are coming towards us so slowly and unwillingly. I cannot quite wonder at the latter. The world is an old acquaintance that does not improve upon one's hands:—however, one must not give way to the disgusts it creates. My maxim, and practice too, is to laugh, because I do not like to cry. I could shed a pail-full of tears over

¹ Lady Anne Conolly.

all I have seen and learnt since my poor nephew's misfortune—the more one has to do with men the worse one finds them.—But can one mend them?—No.—Shall we shut ourselves up from them?—No.—We should grow humourists—and of all animals an Englishman is least made to live alone. For my part, I am conscious of so many faults, that I think I grow better the more bad I see in my neighbours; and there are so many I would not resemble, that it makes me watchful over myself. You, my lord, who have forty more good qualities than I have, should not seclude yourself. I do not wonder you despise knaves and fools; but remember, they want better examples. They will never grow ashamed by conversing but with one another.

I came to settle here on Friday, being drowned out of Twickenham. I find the town desolate, and no news in it, but that the ministry give up the Irish tax—some say, because it will not pass even in Ireland; others, because the city of London would have petitioned against it; and some, because there were factions in the council—which is not the most incredible of all. I am glad, for the sake of some of my friends who would have suffered by it, that it is over. In other respects, I have too much private business of my own to think about the public, which is big enough to take care of itself.

I have heard of some of lady ——'s mortifications. I have regard and esteem for her good qualities, which are many—but I doubt her genius will never suffer her to be quite happy. As she will not take the psalmist's advice of not putting trust, I am sure she would not follow mine; for, with all her piety, king David is the only royal person she will not listen to, and therefore I forbear my sweet council. When she and lord H—— meet, will not they put you in mind of count Gage and lady Mary Herbert, who met in the mines of Asturias after they had failed of the crown of Poland?—Adieu, my dear lord! Come you and my lady among us. You have some friends that are not odious, and who will be rejoiced to see you both—witness, for one,

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* The insanity of George earl of Orford.

LETTER XXXI.

Strawberry-hill, Nov. 11, 1774.

I AM sorry there is still time, my dear lord, to write to you again; and that though there is, I have so little to amuse you with. One is not much nearer news for being within ten miles of London than if in Yorkshire; and besides, whatever reaches us, lady Greenwich catches at the rebound before me, and sends you before I can. Our own circle furnishes very little. Dowagers are good for propagating news when planted, but have done with sending forth suckers. Lady Blandford's coffee-house is removed to town, and the duchess of Newcastle's is little frequented, but by your sister Anne, lady Browne and me. This morning indeed I was at a very fine concert at old Franks's at Isleworth, and heard Leoni, who pleased me more than any thing I have heard these hundred years. There is a full melancholy melody in his voice, though a falsetta, that nothing but a natural voice almost ever compasses. Then he sung songs of Handel in the genuine simple style, and did not put one in pain like rope-dancers. Of the opera I hear a dismal account; for I did not go to it to sit in our box like an old king dowager by myself. Garrick is treating the town, as it deserves and likes to be treated, with scenes, fire-works, and his own writing. A good new play I never expect to see more, nor have seen since *The Provoked Husband*, which came out when I was at school.

—— is dead, they say by his own hand: I don't know wherefore. I was told it was a great political event. If it is, our politics run as low as our plays. From town I heard that lord Bristol was taken speechless with a stroke of the palsy. If he dies, madam Chudleigh must be tried by her peers, as she is certainly either duchess or countess.

Mr. Conway and his company are so pleased with Paris, that they talk of staying till Christmas. I am glad; for they will certainly be better diverted there than here.

Your lordship's most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XXXII.

Strawberry-hill, November 2, 1776.

THOUGH inclination, and consciousness that a man of my age, who is neither in parliament nor in business, has little to do in the world, keep me a good deal out of it, yet I will not, my dear lord, encourage you in retirement, to which for the interest of your friends you have but too much propensity. The manners of the age cannot be agreeable to those who have lived in something soberer times; nor do I think, except in France, where old people are never out of fashion, that it is reasonable to tire those whose youth and spirits may excuse some dissipation. Above all things it is my resolution never to profess retirement, lest, when I have lost all my real teeth, the imaginary one, called a colt's, should hurry me back and make me ridiculous. But one never outlives all one's contemporaries; one may assort with them. Few Englishmen, too, I have observed, can bear solitude without being hurt by it. Our climate makes us capricious, and we must rub off our roughnesses and humours against one another. We have too an always increasing resource, which is, that though we go not to the young, they must come to us: younger usurpers tread on their heels, as they did on ours, and revenge us that have been deposed. They may retain their titles, like queen Christina, sir M—— N——, and lord R——; but they find they have no subjects. If we could but live long enough, we should hear lord C——, Mr. S——, &c. complain of the airs and abominable hours of the youth of the age. You see, my dear lord, my easy philosophy can divert itself with any thing, even with visions; which perhaps is the best way of treating the great vision itself, life. For half one's time one should laugh *with* the world; the other half, *at* it—and then it is hard if we want amusement.

I am heartily glad, for your lordship's and lady Anne Conolly's sakes, that general Howe is safe. I sincerely interest myself for every body you are concerned for. I will say no more on a subject on which I fear I am so unlucky as to differ very much with your lordship, having always fundamentally disapproved our conduct with America. Indeed the present prospect of war with France, when we have so much disabled ourselves, and are exposed in so many quarters, is a topic for general lamentation, rather than

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for canvassing of opinions, which every man must form for himself: and I doubt the moment is advancing when we shall be forced to think alike at least on the present.

I have not been yet above a night at a time in town—but shall be glad to give your lordship and lady Strafford a meeting there whenever you please.

Your most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXIII.

Strawberry-hill, June 12, 1780.

MY DEAR LORD,

IF the late events had been within the common proportion of news, I would have tried to entertain your lordship with an account of them; but they were far beyond that size, and could only create horror and indignation. Religion has often been the cloak of injustice, outrage and villainy: in our late tumults, it scarce kept on its mask a moment; its persecution was downright robbery; and it was so drunk, that it killed its banditti faster than they could plunder. The tumults have been carried on in so violent and scandalous a manner, that I trust they will have no copies. When prisons are levelled to the ground, when the bank is aimed at, and reformation is attempted by conflagrations, the savages of Canada are the only fit allies of lord George Gordon and his crew. The Tower is much too dignified a prison for him—but he had left no other.

I came out of town on Friday, having seen a good deal of the shocking transactions of Wednesday night—in fact, it was difficult to be in London and not see, or think some part of it in flames—I saw those of the King's Bench, New prison, and those on the three sides of the Fleet-market, which united into one blaze. The town and parks are now one camp—the next disagreeable sight to the capital being in ashes. It will still not have been a fatal tragedy, if it brings the nation *one* and all to their senses. It will still be not quite an unhappy country, if we reflect that the old constitution, exactly as it was in the last reign, was the most desirable of any in the universe.

verse. It made us *then* the first people in Europe—we have a vast deal of ground to recover—but can we take a better path than that which king William pointed out to us? I mean the system he left us at the revolution. I am averse to *all* changes of it—it fitted us just as it was.

For some time even individuals must be upon their guard. Our new and now imprisoned apostle has delivered so many congenial saint Peters from jail, that one hears of nothing but robberies on the highway. Your lordship's sister, lady Browne and I have been at Twickenham-park this evening, and kept together and had a horseman at our return. Baron d'Aguilar was shot at in that very lane on Thursday night. A troop of the fugitives had rendezvoused in Combe-wood, and were dislodged thence yesterday by the light-horse.

I do not know a syllable but what relates to these disturbances. The newspapers have neglected few truths. Lies, without their natural propensity to falsehoods, they could not avoid, for every minute produces some, at least exaggerations. We were threatened with swarms of good protestants *à bruler* from all quarters, and report sent various detachments from the metropolis on similar errands; but thank God they have been but reports!—Oh! when shall we have peace and tranquillity? I hope your lordship and lady Strafford will at least enjoy the latter in your charming woods. I have long doubted which of our passions is the strongest—perhaps every one of them is equally strong in some person or other—but I have no doubt but ambition is the most detestable, and the most inexcusable; for its mischiefs are by far the most extensive, and its enjoyments by no means proportioned to its anxieties. The latter, I believe, is the case of most passions—but then all but ambition cost little pain to any but the possessor. An ambitious man must be divested of all feeling but for himself. The torment of others is his high road to happiness. Were the transmigration of souls true, and accompanied by consciousness, how delighted would Alexander or Croesus be to find themselves on four legs, and divested of a wish to conquer new worlds, or to heap up all the wealth of this! Adieu, my dear lord!

I am most gratefully your lordship's obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXIV.

Strawberry-hill, September 9, 1780.

I AM very happy at receiving a letter from your lordship this moment, as I thought it very long since we had corresponded, but am afraid of being troublesome, when I have not the excuse of thanking you, or something worth telling you, which in truth is not the case at present. No soul, whether interested or not, but deafens one about elections. I always detested them, even when in parliament; and when I lived a good deal at White's, preferred hearing of Newmarket to elections; for the former, being uttered in a language I did not understand, did not engage my attention; but as they talked of elections in *English*, I could not help knowing what they said. It does surprise me, I own, that people can choose to stuff their heads with details and circumstances, of which in six weeks they will never hear or think more. The weather till now has been the chief topic of conversation. Of late it has been the third very hot summer; but refreshed by so little rain, that the banks of the Thames have been and are, I believe, like those of the Manzanares. The night before last we had some good showers, and to-day a thick fog has dissolved in some as thin as gauze. Still I am not quite sorry to enjoy the weather of adust climates without their tempests and insects.—Lady Cowper I lately visited, and but lately: if what I hear is true, I shall be a gainer, for they talk of lord D—— having her house at Richmond: like your lordship, I confess I was surprised at his choice. I know nothing to the prejudice of the young lady—but I should not have selected, for so gentle and very amiable a man, a sister of the empress of fashion, nor a daughter of the goddess of wisdom.

They talk of great dissatisfactions in the fleet. Geary and Barrington are certainly retired. It looks, if this deplorable war should continue, as if all our commanders by sea and land were to be disgraced or disgusted.

The people here have christened Mr. Shirley's new house, *Spite-hall*¹. It is dismal to think that one may live to seventy-seven, and go out of the world doing as ill-natured an act as possible! When I am reduced to detail the gazette of Twickenham, I had better release your lordship—but either

¹ Because built (it was said) on purpose to intercept a view of the Thames from his opposite neighbour. E.

way it is from the utmost attention and respect for your lordship and lady Strafford, as I am ever

Most devotedly and gratefully yours,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXV.

Strawberry-hill, June 13, 1781.

IT was very kind, my dear lord, to recollect me so soon: I wish I could return it by amusing you; but here I know nothing, and suppose it is owing to age that even in town I do not find the transactions of the world very entertaining. One must sit up all night to see or hear any thing—and if the town intends to do any thing, they never begin to do it till next day.

Mr. Conway will certainly be here the end of this month, having thoroughly secured his island from surprise, and it is not liable to be taken any other way. I wish he was governor of this bigger one too, which does not seem quite so well guaranteed.

Your lordship will wonder at a visit I had yesterday: it was from Mr. ———, who has passed a day and night here. It was not from my being a fellow-scholar of Vestrís, but from his being turned antiquary; the last patina I should have thought a Macaroni would have taken. I am as proud of such a disciple as of having converted Dicky Bateman from a Chinese to a Goth. Though he was the founder of the Sharawadgi taste in England, I preached so effectually that his every pagoda took the veil. The methodists say, one must have been very wicked before one can be of the elect—yet is that extreme more distant from *the ton*, which avows knowing and liking nothing but the fashion of the instant, to studying what were the modes of five hundred years ago? I hope this conversion will not ruin Mr. ———'s fortune under the lord lieutenant of Ireland. How his Irish majesty will be shocked, when he asks how large prince B——'s shoe-buckles are grown, to be answered, he does not know, but that Charles Brandon's cod-piece at the last birth-day had three yards of velvet in it! and that the
duchess

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duchess of Buckingham thrust out her chin two inches farther than ever, in admiration of it! and that the marchioness of Dorset had put out her jaw by endeavouring to imitate her!

We have at last had some rains, which I hope extended to Yorkshire, and that your lordship has found Wentworth-castle in the bloom of verdure. I always, as in duty bound, wish prosperity to every body and every thing there, and am

Your lordship's ever devoted and grateful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXVI.

Strawberry-hill, August 31, 1781.

YOUR lordship's too friendly partiality sees talents in me, which I am sure I do not possess. With all my desire of amusing you, and with all my sense of gratitude for your long and unalterable goodness, it is quite impossible to send you an entertaining letter from hence. The insipidity of my life, that is passed with a few old people that are wearing out like myself, after surviving so many of my acquaintance, can furnish no matter of correspondence. What few novelties I hear, come stale, and not till they have been hashed in the newspapers; and though we are engaged in such big and wide wars, they produce no striking events, nor furnish any thing but regrets for the lives and millions we fling away to no purpose! One cannot divert when one can only compute; nor extract entertainment from prophecies that there is no reason to colour favourably. We have indeed foretold success for seven years together, but debts and taxes have been the sole completion.

If one turns to private life, what is there to furnish pleasing topics? Dissipation without object, pleasure, or genius, is the only colour of the times. One hears every day of somebody undone, but can we or they tell how, except when it is by the most expeditious of all means, gaming? And
now,

now, even the loss of an hundred thousand pounds is not rare enough to be surprising. One may stare or growl, but cannot relate any thing that is worth hearing. I do not love to censure a younger age; but in good truth they neither amuse me nor enable me to amuse others.

The pleasantest event I know, happened to myself last Sunday morning, when general Conway, very unexpectedly, walked in as I was at breakfast, in his way to Park-place. He looks as well in health and spirits as ever I saw him; and though he staid but half an hour, I was perfectly content, as he is at home.

I am glad your lordship likes the fourth book of *The Garden*, which is admirably coloured. The version of *Fresnoy* I think the finest translation I ever saw. It is a most beautiful poem extracted from as dry and prosaic a parcel of verses as could be put together: Mr. Mason has gilded lead, and burnished it highly. Lord and lady Harcourt I should think would make him a visit, and I hope for their sakes will visit Wentworth-castle. As they both have taste, I should be sorry they did not see the perfectest specimen of architecture I know.

Mrs. D—— certainly goes abroad this winter. I am glad of it for every reason but her absence. I am certain it will be essential to her health; and she has so eminently a classic genius, and is herself so superior an artist, that I enjoy the pleasure she will have in visiting Italy.

As your lordship has honoured all the productions of my press with your acceptance, I venture to inclose the last, which I printed to oblige the L——s. There are many beautiful and poetic expressions in it. A wedding to be sure is neither a new nor a promising subject, nor will outlast the favours: still I think Mr. Jones's ode is uncommonly good for the occasion; at least, if it does not much charm lady Strafford and your lordship. I know you will receive it kindly as a tribute from Strawberry-hill, as every homage is due to you both from its master.

Your devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ The marriage of lord Althorp with miss Bingham.

LETTER XXXVII.

Berkeley-square, November 27, 1781.

EACH fresh mark of your lordship's kindness and friendship calls on me for thanks and an answer: every other reason would enjoin me silence. I not only grow so old, but the symptoms of age increase so fast, that, as they advise me to keep out of the world, that retirement makes me less fit to be informing or entertaining. The philosophers who have sported on the verge of the tomb, or they who have *affected* to sport in the same situation, both tacitly implied that it was not out of their thoughts—and however dear what we are going to leave may be, all that is not particularly dear must cease to interest us much. If those reflections blend themselves with our gayest thoughts, must not their hue grow more dusky when public misfortunes and disgraces cast a general shade? The age, it is true, soon emerges out of every gloom, and wantons as before.—But does not that levity imprint a still deeper melancholy on those who do think? Have any of our calamities corrected us? Are we not revelling on the brink of the precipice? Does administration grow more sage, or desire that we should grow more sober? Are these themes for letters, my dear lord? Can one repeat common news with indifference, while our shame is writing for future history by the pens of all our numerous enemies? When did England see two whole armies lay down their arms and surrender themselves prisoners? Can venal addresses efface such stigmas, that will be recorded in every country in Europe? Or will such disgraces have no consequences? Is not America lost to us? Shall we offer up more human victims to the daemon of obstinacy—and shall we tax ourselves deeper to furnish out the sacrifice? These are thoughts I cannot stifle at the moment that enforces them; and though I do not doubt but the same spirit of dissipation that has swallowed up all our principles, will reign again in three days with its wonted sovereignty, I had rather be silent than vent my indignation.—Yet I cannot talk, for I cannot think, on any other subject. It was not six days ago, that in the height of four raging wars I saw in the papers an account of the opera and of the dresses of the company; and thence the town, and thence of course the whole nation, were informed that Mr. F—— had very little powder in his hair. Would not one think that our newspapers were penned by boys just come from school for the information

of their sisters and cousins? Had we had Gazettes and Morning Posts in those days, would they have been filled with such tittle-tattle after the battle of Agincourt, or in the more resembling weeks after the battle of Naseby? Did the French trifle equally even during the ridiculous war of the Fronde? If they were as impertinent then, at least they had wit in their levity. We are monkeys in conduct, and as clumsy as bears when we try to gambol. Oh! my lord! I have no patience with my country! and shall leave it without regret!—Can we be proud when all Europe scorns us? It was wont to envy us, sometimes to hate us, but never despised us before. James the first was contemptible, but he did not lose an America! His eldest grandson sold us, his younger lost us—but we kept ourselves. Now we have run to meet the ruin—and it is coming!

I beg your lordship's pardon, if I have said too much—but I do not believe I have. You have never sold yourself, and, therefore, have not been accessary to our destruction. You must be happy *now* not to have a son, who would live to grovel in the dregs of England. Your lordship has long been so wise as to secede from the follies of your countrymen. May you and lady Strafford long enjoy the tranquillity that has been your option even in better days!—and may you amuse yourself without giving loose to such reflections as have overflowed in this letter from

Your devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE!

LETTER XXXVIII.

Strawberry-hill, August 16, 1782.

IF this letter reaches your lordship, I believe it must be conveyed by a dove; for we are all under water, and a postman has not where to set the sole of his foot. They tell me, that in the north you have not been so drowned: which will be very fortunate; for in these parts every thing is to be apprehended for the corn, the sheep, and the camps—but, in truth, all kinds of prospects are most gloomy, and even in lesser lights uncomfortable. Here we cannot stir, but armed for battle. Mr. Potts, who

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lives at Mr. Hindley's, was attacked and robbed last week at the end of Gunnersbury-lane, by five footpads who had two blunderbusses. Lady Browne and I do continue going to Twickenham-park; but I don't know how long it will be prudent, nor whether it is so now.

I have not been at Park-place, for Mr. Conway is never there, at least only for a night or two. His regiment was reviewed yesterday at Ashford-common, but I did not go to see it.—In truth, I have so little taste for common sights, that I never did see a review in my life. I was in town last week, yet saw not monsieur de Grasse; nor have seen the giant or the dwarf.

Poor Mrs. Clive is certainly very declining, but has been better of late, and, which I am glad of, thinks herself better. All visions that comfort one are desirable—the conditions of mortality do not bear being pryed into; nor am I an admirer of that philosophy that scrutinizes into them: the philosophy of deceiving one's self is vastly preferable. What signifies anticipating what we cannot prevent?

I do not pretend to send your lordship any news, for I do not know a tittle, nor inquire. Peace is the sole event of which I wish to hear. For private news I have outlived almost all the world with which I was acquainted, and have no curiosity about the next generation, scarce more than about the 20th century. I wish I was less indifferent for the sake of the few with whom I correspond, your lordship in particular, who are always so good and partial to me, and on whom I should indubitably wait, were I fit to take a long journey; but as I walk no better than a tortoise, I make a conscience of not incommodating my friends, whom I should only confine at home. Indeed both my feet and hands are so lame, that I now scarce ever dine abroad. Being so antiquated and insipid, I will release your lordship, and am, with my unalterable respects to lady Strafford,

Your lordship's most devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIX.

Strawberry-hill, October 3, 1782.

I DID think it long since I had the honour of hearing from your lordship; but conscious how little I could repay you with any entertainment, I waited with patience. In fact, I believe summer-correspondences often turn on complaints of want of news. It is unlucky that that is generally the season of correspondence as it is of separation. People assembled in a capital contrive to furnish matter, but then they have not occasion to write it. Summer being the season of campaigns ought to be more fertile—I am glad when that is not the case, for what is an account of a battle but a list of burials? Vultures and birds of prey might write with pleasure to their correspondents in the Alps of such events—but they ought to be melancholy topics to those who have no beaks or talons. At this moment if I was an epicure among the sharks, I should rejoice that general Elliot has just sent the carcasses of 1500 Spaniards down to market under Gibraltar—but I am more pleased that he dispatched boats and saved some of those whom he had overfet. What must a man of so much feeling have suffered at being forced to do his duty so well as he has done! I remember hearing such another humane being, that brave old admiral sir Charles Wager, say, that in his life he had never killed a fly.

This demolition of the Spanish armada is a great event—a very good one, if it prevents a battle between lord Howe and the combined fleets, as I should hope; and yet better if it produces peace; the only political crisis to which I look with eagerness. Were that happy moment arrived, there is ample matter to employ our great men, if we have any, in retrieving the affairs of this country, if they are to be retrieved.—But though our sedentary politicians write abundance of letters in the newspapers, full of plans of public spirit, I doubt the nation is not sober enough to set about its own work in earnest. When none reform themselves, little good is to be expected. We see by the excess of highwaymen how far evils will go before any attempt is made to cure them. I am sure, from the magnitude of this inconvenience, that I am not talking merely like an old man. I have lived here above thirty years, and used to go every where round at all hours.

hours of the night without any precaution. I cannot now stir a mile from my own house after sun-set without one or two servants with blunderbusses. I am not surprised your lordship's pheasants were stolen: a woman was taken last Saturday night loaded with nine geese, and they say has impeached a gang of fourteen house-breakers—but these are under graduates—when they should have taken their doctor's degrees, they would not have piddled in such little game. Those regius-professors the nabobs have taught men not to plunder for farthings.

I am very sensible of your lordship's kindness to my nephew Mr. C—. He is a sensible, well-behaved young man, and, I trust, would not have abused your goodness.

Mr. Mason writes to me, that he shall be at York at the end of this month. I was to have gone to Nuneham; but the house is so little advanced, that it is a question whether they can receive me. Mason, I doubt, has been idle there. I am sure, if he found no muses there, he could pick up none at Oxford, where there is not so much as a bed-maker that ever lived in a muse's family.

Tonton begs his duty to all the lambs, and trusts that lady Strafford will not reject his homage.

I am ever her ladyship's and your lordship's

Most devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XL.

Strawberry-hill, June 24, 1783.

THOUGH your lordship's partiality extends even to my letters, you must perceive that they grow as antiquated as the writer. News are the soul of letters: when we give them a body of our own invention, it is as unlike to life as a statue. I have withdrawn so much from the world, that the newspapers know every thing before me, especially since they have usurped the province

province of telling every thing, private as well as public; and consequently a great deal more than I should wish to know, or like to report. When I do hear the transactions of much younger people, they do not pass from my ears into my memory; nor does your lordship interest yourself more about them than I do. Yet still, when one reduces one's department to such narrow limits, one's correspondence suffers by it. However, as I desire to show only my gratitude and attachment, not my wit, I shall certainly obey your lordship as long as you are content to read my letters, after I have told you fairly how little they can entertain you.

For imports of French, I believe we shall have few more. They have not ruined us so totally by the war, much less enriched themselves so much by it, but that they who have been here, complained so piteously of the expensiveness of England, that probably they will deter others from a similar jaunt—nor, such is their fickleness, are the French constant to any thing but admiration of themselves. Their Anglomanie I hear has mounted—or descended—from our customs to our persons. English people are in fashion at Versailles. A Mr. ———, who wrote some pretty verses at Bath two or three years ago, is a favourite there. One who was so, or may be still, the *beau Dillon*, came upon a very different errand—in short, to purchase at any price a book written by Linguet, which was just coming out, called *Antoinette*. That will tell your lordship why the *beau Dillon* was the messenger.

Monsieur de Guignes and his daughters came hither—but it was at eight o'clock at night in the height of the deluge. You may be sure I was much flattered by such a visit! I was forced to light candles to show them any thing; and must have lighted the moon to show them the views. If this is their way of seeing England, they might as well look at it with an opera glass from the shore of Calais.

Mr. Mason is to come to me on Sunday, and will find me mighty busy in making my lock of hay, which is not yet cut. I don't know why, but people are always more anxious about their hay than their corn, or twenty other things that cost them more. I suppose my lord Chesterfield, or some such dictator, made it fashionable to care about one's hay.—Nobody betrays solicitude about getting in his rents.

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We have exchanged spring and summer for autumn and winter, as well as day for night. If religion or law enjoined people to love light and prospects and verdure, I should not wonder if perverseness made us hate them—no, nor if society made us prefer living always in town to solitude and beauty.—But that is not the case. The most fashionable hurry into the country at Christmas and Easter, let the weather be ever so bad—and the finest ladies, who will go no whither till eleven at night, certainly pass more tiresome hours in London alone than they would in the country.—But all this is no business of mine: they do what they like, and so do I.—And I am exceedingly tolerant about people who are perfectly indifferent to me. The sun and the seasons were not gone out of fashion when I was young—and I may do what I will with them now I am old: for fashion is fortunately no law but to its devotees. Were I five-and-twenty, I dare to say, I should think every whim of my contemporaries very wise, as I did then. In one light I am always on the side of the young; for they only silently despise those who do not conform to their ordonnances; but age is very apt to be angry at the change of customs, and partial to others no better founded. It is happy when we are occupied by nothing more serious. It is happy for a nation, when mere fashions are a topic that can employ its attention; for though dissipation may lead to graver moments, it commences with ease and tranquillity; and they at least who live before the scene shifts are fortunate, considering and comparing themselves with the various regions who enjoy no parallel felicity. I confess my reflections are *couleur de rose* at present. I did not much expect to live to see peace, without far more extensive ruin than has fallen on us. I will not probe futurity in search of less agreeable conjectures. Prognosticators may see many seeds of dusky hue—but I am too old to look forwards. Without any omens, common sense tells one, that in the revolution of ages nations must have unprosperous periods.—But why should I torment myself for what may happen in twenty years after my death, more than for what may happen in two hundred? Nor shall I be more interested in the one than in the other. This is no indifference for my country.—I wish it could always be happy—But so I do to all other countries. Yet who could ever pass a tranquil moment, if such future speculations vexed him?

Adieu, my good lord!—I doubt this letter has more marks of senility than the one I announced at the beginning. When I had no news to send you, it was no reason for tiring you with common places.—But your lord-

ship's indulgence spoils me. Does not it look as if I thought, that, because you commend my letters, you would like whatever I say? Will not lady Strafford think that I abuse your patience?—I ask both your pardons—and am to both

A most devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XLI.

Strawberry-hill, August 1, 1783.

IT would be great happiness indeed to me, my dear lord, if such nothings as my letters could contribute to any part of your lordship's; but as your own partiality bestows their chief merit on them, you see they owe more to your friendship than to the writer. It is not my interest to depreciate them; much less to undermine the foundation of their sole worth. Yet it would be dishonest not to warn your lordship, that if my letters have had any intrinsic recommendation, they must lose of it every day. Years and frequent returns of gout have made a ruin of me. Dullness, in the form of indolence, grows upon me. I am inactive, lifeless, and so indifferent to most things, that I neither enquire after nor remember any topics that might enliven my letters. Nothing is so insipid as my way of passing my time. But I need not specify what my letters speak.—They can have no spirit left—and would be perfectly inanimate, if attachment and gratitude to your lordship were as liable to be extinguished by old age as our more amusing qualities. I make no new connections; but cherish those that remain with all the warmth of youth and the piety of grey hairs.

The weather here has been, and is, with very few intervals, sultry to this moment. I think it has been of service to me; though by overheating myself I had a few days of lameness. The harvest is half over already all round us, and so pure, that not a poppy or cornflower is to be seen. Every field seems to have been weeded like B——'s bowling-green. If Ceres, who is at least as old as many of our fashionable ladies, loves tricking herself out in flowers as they do, she must be mortified; and with more reason;

for she looks well always with top-knots of ultramarine and vermilion, which modern goddesses do not for half so long as they think they do. As providence showers so many blessings on us, I wish the peace may confirm them! Necessary I am sure it was—and when it cannot restore us, where should we have been, had the war continued! Of our situation and prospect I confess my opinion is melancholy—not from present politics, but from past. We flung away the most brilliant position—I doubt, for a long season! With politics I have totally done. I wish the present ministers may last; for I think better of their principles than of those of their opponents (with a few salvoes on both sides), and so I do of their abilities.—But it would be folly in me to concern myself about new generations.—How little a way can I see of their progress!

I am rather surprised at the new countess of ———. How could a woman be ambitious of resembling Prometheus, to be pawed and clawed and gnawed by a vulture? I beg your earldom's pardon; but I could not conceive that a coronet was so very tempting!

Lady Browne is quite recovered—unless she relapses from what we suffer at Twickenham-park from a lord N——, an old seaman, who is come to Richmond on a visit to the duke of Montrose. I think the poor man must be out of his senses—at least he talks us out of ours. It is the most incessant and incoherent rhapsody that ever was heard. He sits by the card-table, and pours on Mrs. N—— all that ever happened in his voyages or his memory. He details the ship's allowance, and talks to her as if she was his first mate. Then in the mornings he carries his daughter to town to see St. Paul's, and the Tower, and Westminster-abbey; and at night disgorges all he has seen; till we don't know the ace of spades from queen Elizabeth's pocket-pistol in the armory. Mercy on us!—And mercy on your lordship too! Why should you be stunned with that alarum? Have you had your earthquake, my lord? Many have had theirs. I assure you I have had mine. Above a week ago, when broad awake, the doors of the cabinet by my bed-side rattled, without a breath of wind. I imagined somebody was walking on the leads, or had broken into the room under me. It was between four and five in the morning. I rang my bell. Before my servant could come it happened again; and was exactly like the horizontal tremor I felt from the earthquake some years ago. As I had rung once, it is plain I
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was awake. I rang again ; but heard nothing more. I am quite persuaded there was some commotion ; nor is it surprising that the dreadful eruptions of fire on the coasts of Italy and Sicily should have occasioned some alteration that has extended faintly hither, and contributed to the heats and mists that have been so extraordinary. George Montagu said of our last earthquake, that it was so tame you might have stroked it. It is comfortable to live where one can reason on them without dreading them ! What satisfaction should you have in having erected such a monument of your taste, my lord, as Wentworth-castle, if you did not know but it might be overturned in a moment and crush you ? Sir William Hamilton is expected : he has been groping in all those devastations.—Of all vocations I would not be a professor of earthquakes ! I prefer studies that are *couleur de rose*—nor would ever think of calamities, if I can do nothing to relieve them. Yet this is a weakness of mind that I do not defend. They are more respectable who can behold philosophically the great theatre of events—or rather this little theatre of ours ! In some ampler sphere, they may look on the catastrophe of Messina as we do on kicking to pieces an ant-hill.

Bless me ! what a farrago is my letter ! It is like the extracts of books in a monthly magazine—I had no right to censure poor lord N——'s ramblings ! Lady Strafford will think he has infected me. Good-night, my dear lord and lady !

Your ever devoted

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XLII.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 12, 1783.

YOUR lordship tells me you hope my summer has glided pleasantly, like our Thames. I cannot say it has passed very pleasantly to me, though, like the Thames, dry and low ; for somehow or other I caught a rheumatic fever in the great heats, and cannot get rid of it. I have just been at Park-place and Nuneham, in hopes change of air would cure me ; but to no purpose. Indeed, as want of sleep is my chief complaint, I doubt I must make use of a very different and more disagreeable remedy, the air of London, the only place that I ever find agree with me when I am out of

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order. I was there for two nights a fortnight ago, and slept perfectly well. In vain has my predilection for Strawberry made me try to persuade myself that this was all fancy; but I fear, reasons that appear strong, though contrary to our inclinations, must be good ones. London at this time of year is as nauseous a drug as any in an apothecary's shop. I could find nothing at all to do, and so went to Astley's, which indeed was much beyond my expectation. I do not wonder any longer that Darius was chosen king by the instructions he gave to his horse; nor that Caligula made his consul. Astley can make his dance minuets and hornpipes; which is more extraordinary than to make them vote at an election, or act the part of a magistrate, which animals of less capacities can perform as dextrously as a returning officer or a master in chancery.—But I shall not have even Astley now. Her majesty the queen of France, who has as much taste as Caligula, has sent for the whole *dramatis personae* to Paris.

Sir William Hamilton was at Park-place, and gave us dreadful accounts of Calabria: he looks much older, and has the patina of a bronze.

At Nuneham I was much pleased with the improvements both within doors and without. Mr. Mason was there; and, as he shines in every art, was assisting Mrs. Harcourt with his new discoveries in painting, by which he will unite miniature and oil. Indeed, she is a very apt and extraordinary scholar. Since our professors seem to have lost the art of colouring, I am glad at least that they have ungraduated assessors.

We have plenty and peace at last! consequently leisure for repairing some of our losses, if we have sense enough to set about the task. On what will happen I shall make no conjectures, as it is not likely I should see much of what is to come. Our enemies have humbled us enough to content them; and we have succeeded so ill in innovations, that surely we shall not tempt new storms in haste.

From this place I can send your lordship nothing new or entertaining, nor expect more game in town, whither nothing but search of health should carry me. Perhaps it is a vain chase at my age—but at my age one cannot trust to nature's operating cures without aiding her—it is always time enough to abandon one's self, when no care will palliate our decays. I hope your lordship and lady Strafford will long be in no want of such attentions;

tentions: nor should I have talked so much of my own cracks, had I had any thing else to tell you. It would be silly to aim at vivacity when it is gone: and though a lively old man is sometimes an agreeable being, a pretending old man is ridiculous. Aches and an apothecary cannot give one genuine spirits. 'Tis sufficient if they do not make one peevish. Your lordship is so kind as to accept of me as I am, and you shall find nothing more counterfeit in me than the sincere respect and gratitude with which I have the honour to be.

Your lordship's most devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XLIII.

Strawberry-hill, October 11, 1783.

MY rheumatism, I thank your lordship, is certainly better, though not quite gone. It was very troublesome at night till I took the bark; but that medicine makes me sleep like opium—But I will say no more about it, nothing is so troublesome as to talk of chronical complaints: has one any right to draw on the compassion of others, when one must renew the address daily and for months?

The aspect of Ireland is very tempestuous. I doubt they will hurt us materially without benefiting themselves. If they obtain very short parliaments, they will hurt themselves more than us, by introducing a confusion that will prevent their improvements.—Whatever country does adopt short parliaments, will, I am entirely persuaded, be forced to recur to their former practice—I mean, if the disorders introduced do not produce despotism of some sort or other. I am very sorry Mr. Mason concurs in trying to revive the associations. Methinks our state is so deplorable, that every healing measure ought to be attempted instead of innovations. For my own part, I expect nothing but distractions, and am not concerned to be so old. I *am* so old, that, were I disposed to novelties, I should think they little became my age. I should be ashamed, when my hour shall come, to be

be caught in a riot of country 'squires and parsons, and haranguing a mob with a shaking head. A leader of faction ought to be young and vigorous. If an aged gentleman does get an ascendant, he may be sure that younger men are counting on his exit, and only flatter him to succeed to his influence, while they are laughing at his misplaced activity. At least, these would be my thoughts, who of all things dread being a jest to the juvenile, if they find me out of my sphere.

I have seen lord C——'s play, and it has a great deal of merit—perhaps more than your lordship would expect. The language and images are the best part, after the two principal scenes, which are really fine.

I did, as your lordship knows and says, always like and esteem lady F——. I scarce know my lord; but, from what I have heard of him in the house of lords, have conceived a good opinion of his sense: of his character I never heard any ill—which is a great testimonial in his favour, when there are so many horrid characters, and when all that are conspicuous have their minutest actions tortured to depose against them.

You may be sure, my dear lord, that I heartily pity lady Strafford's and your loss of four-legged friends. Sense and fidelity are wonderful recommendations; and when one meets with them, and can be confident that one is not imposed upon, I cannot think that the two additional legs are any drawback. At least I know that I have had friends who would never have vexed or betrayed me, if they had walked on all-fours.

I have no news to send your lordship—indeed I inquire for none, nor wish to hear any. Whence is any good to come? I am every day surprised at hearing people eager for news. If there is any, they are sure of hearing it.—How can one be curious to know one does not know what—and perpetually curious to know? Has one nothing to do but to hear and relate something new?—And why can one care about nothing but what one does not know?—And why is every event worth hearing, only because one has not heard it? Have not there been changes enough? divorces enough? bankruptcies and robberies enough?—and, above all, lies enough?—No; or people would not be every day impatient for the newspaper.

paper. I own, I am glad on Sunday when there is no paper, and no fresh lies circulating. Adieu, my good lord and lady! May you long enjoy your tranquillity, undisturbed by villainy, folly and madness!

Your most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XLIV.

Berkeley-square, November 10, 1783.

IF I consulted my reputation as a writer, which your lordship's partiality is so kind as to allot me, I should wait a few days till my granary is fuller of stock, which probably it would be by the end of next week—but in truth, I had rather be a grateful, and consequently a punctual correspondent, than an ingenious one; as I value the honour of your lordship's friendship more than such tinsel bits of fame as can fall to my share, and of which I am particularly sick at present, as the Public Advertiser dressed me out t'other day with a heap of that dross, which he had pillaged from some other strolling playwrights, who I did not desire should be plundered for me.

Indeed, when the parliament does meet, I doubt, nay hope it will make less sensation than usual. The orators of Dublin have brought the flowers of Billingsgate to so high perfection, that ours comparatively will have no more scent than a dead dandelion. If your lordship has not seen the speeches of Mr. F—— and Mr. G——, you may perhaps still think that our oyster-women can be more abusive than members of parliament.

Since I began my letter, I hear that the meeting of the delegates from the volunteers is adjourned to the first of February. This seems a very favourable circumstance. I don't like a reformation begun by a popish army! Indeed I did hope that peace would bring us peace, at least not more than the discords incidental to a free government: but we seem not to have attained that æra yet! I hope it will arrive, though I may not see it. I shall not easily believe that any radical alteration of a constitution that preserved us so long and carried us to so great a height, will recover our affairs. There:

There is a wide difference between correcting abuses, and removing landmarks. Nobody disliked more than I the strides that were attempted towards increasing the prerogative; but as the excellence of our constitution above all others, consists in the balance established between the three powers of king, lords, and commons, I wish to see that equilibrium preserved. No single man, nor any private junto, has a right to dictate laws to all three. In Ireland, truly, a still worse spirit I apprehend to be at bottom—in short, it is phrensy or folly to suppose that an army composed of three parts of catholics can be intended for any good purposes.

These are my sentiments, my dear lord, and, you know, very disinterested. For myself, I have nothing to wish but ease and tranquillity for the rest of my time. I have no enmities to avenge. I do hope the present administration will last, as I believe there are *more* honest men in it, than in any set that could replace them, though I have not a grain of partiality more than I had for their associates. Mr. Fox I think by far the ablest and soundest head in England, and am persuaded that the more he is tried the greater man he will appear.

Perhaps it is impertinent to trouble your lordship with my creed—it is certainly of no consequence to any body—but I have nothing else that could entertain you—and at so serious a crisis, can one think of trifles? In general I am not sorry that the nation is most disposed to trifle—the less it takes part, the more leisure will the ministers have to attend to the most urgent points. When so many individuals assume to be legislators, it is lucky that very few obey their institutes.

I rejoice to hear of lady Strafford's good health, and am her and your lordship's

Most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XLV.

Berkeley-square, Dec. 11, 1783.

YOUR lordship is so partial to me and my idle letters, that I am afraid of writing them—not lest they should sink below the standard you have pleased to affix to them in your own mind, but from fear of being intoxicated into attempting to keep them up to it, which would destroy their only merit, their being written naturally and without pretensions. Gratitude and good breeding compel me to make due answers; but I entreat your lordship to be assured, that however vain I am of your favour, my only aim is to preserve the honour of your friendship; that it is all the praise I ask or wish; and that, with regard to letter-writing, I am firmly persuaded that it is a province in which women will always shine superiorly; for our sex is too jealous of the reputation of good sense, to condescend to hazard a thousand trifles and negligences, which give grace, ease and familiarity to correspondence.—I will say no more on that subject, for I feel that I am on the brink of a dissertation—and though that fault would prove the truth of my proposition, I will not punish your lordship only to convince you that I am in the right.

The winter is not dull or disagreeable: on the contrary, it is pleasing, as the town is occupied on general subjects, and not, as is too common, on private scandal, private vices and follies. The India bill, air-balloons, Vestris and the automaton, share all attention. Mrs. Siddons, as less a novelty, does not engross all conversation. If abuse still keeps above par, it confines itself to its prescriptive province, the ministerial line. In that walk it has tumbled a little into the kennel—The low buffoonery of lord —, in laying the caricatura of the Coalition on the table of your lordship's house, has levelled it to Sadler's Wells; and Mr. —, the pillar of invective, does not promise to re-erect it—not, I conclude, from want of having imported a stock of ingredients, but his presumptuous debut on the very night of his entry was so wretched, and delivered in so barbarous a brogue, that I question whether he will ever recover the blow Mr. Courtenay gave him. A young man may correct and improve, and rise from a first fall; but an elderly formed speaker has not an equal chance. Mr. H—, lord A—'s heir, but

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but by no means so laconic, had more success. Though his first essay, it was not at all dashed by bashfulness—and though he might have blushed for discovering so much personal rancour to Mr. Fox, he rather seemed to be impatient to discharge it.

Your lordship sees in the papers, that the two houses of Ireland have firmly resisted the innovations of the volunteers. Indeed it was time for the protestant proprietors to make their stand; for though the catholics behave decently, it would be into their hands that the prize would fall. The delegates, it is true, have sent over a most loyal address—but I wish their actions may not contradict their words! Mr. —'s discomfiture here will, I suppose, carry him back to a field wherein his wicked spirit may have more effect. It is a very serious moment!—I am in pain left your county, my dear lord (you know what I mean), should countenance such pernicious designs.

I am impatient for next month, for the pleasure of seeing your lordship and lady Strafford, and am of both

The devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XLVI.

Strawberry-hill, August 6, 1784.

I AM very sorry, my dear lord, that I must answer your lordship's letter by a condolence. I had not the honour of being acquainted with Mrs. V—, but have heard so much good of her, that it is impossible not to lament her.

Since this month began, we have had fine weather, and 'twere great pity if we had not, when the earth is covered with such abundant harvests! They talk of an earthquake having been felt in London. Had sir W. Hamilton been there, he would think the town gave itself great airs. He I believe is putting,

ting up volcanos in his own country. In my youth, philosophers were eager to ascribe every uncommon discovery to the deluge—now it is the fashion to solve every appearance by conflagrations. If there was such an inundation upon the earth, and such a furnace under it, I am amazed that Noah and company were not boiled to death. Indeed I am a great sceptic about human reasonings. They predominate only for a time, like other mortal fashions, and are so often exploded after the mode is passed, that I hold them little more serious, though they call themselves wisdom. How many have I lived to see established and confuted! For instance, the necessity of a southern continent as a balance was supposed to be unanswerable—and so it was, till captain Cook found there was no such thing. We are poor silly animals: we live for an instant upon a particle of a boundless universe, and are much like a butterfly that should argue about the nature of the seasons and what creates their vicissitudes, and does not exist itself to see one annual revolution of them!

Adieu, my dear lord!—If my reveries are foolish, remember, I give them for no better. If I depreciate human wisdom, I am sure I do not assume a grain to myself, nor have any thing to value myself upon more than being

Your lordship's most obliged humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XLVII.

Strawberry-hill, September 7, 1784.

THE summer is come at last, my lord, dressed as fine as a birth-day, though not with so many flowers on its head. In truth, the sun is an old fool, who apes the modern people of fashion by arriving too late: the day is going to bed before he makes his appearance; and one has scarce time to admire his embroidery of green and gold. It was cruel to behold such expanse of corn every where, and yet see it all turned to a water-soupy. If I could admire Dante, which, asking Mr. Hayley's pardon, I do not, I would have written an olio of Jews and Pagans, and sent Ceres to reproach master Noah with breaking his promise of the world never being drowned again.—

But this last week has restored matters to their old channel; and I trust we shall have bread to eat next winter, or I think we must have lived on apples, of which to be sure there is enough to prevent a famine. This is all I know, my lord; and I hope no news to your lordship. I have exhausted the themes of air-balloons and highwaymen; and if you *will* have my letters, you must be content with my common-place chat on the seasons. I do nothing worth repeating, nor hear that others do: and though I am content to rust myself, I should be glad to tell your lordship any thing that would amuse you. I dined two days ago at Mrs. Garrick's with sir William Hamilton, who is returning to the kingdom of cinders. Mrs. Walsingham was there with her son and daughter. He is a very pleasing young man; a fine figure; his face like hers, with something of his grandfather sir Charles Williams, without his vanity; very sensible, and uncommonly well bred. The daughter is an imitatrix of Mrs. D——, and has modelled a bust of her brother. Mrs. D—— herself is modelling two masks for the key-stones of the new bridge at Henley. Sir William, who has seen them, says they are in her true antique style. I am in possession of her sleeping dogs in terra cotta. She asked me if I would consent to her executing them in marble for the duke of Richmond?—I said, Gladly; I should like they should exist in a more durable material—but I would not part with the original, which is sharper and more alive. Mr. Wyatt the architect saw them here lately; and said, he was sure that if the idea was given to the best statuary in Europe, he would not produce so perfect a groupe. Indeed, with these dogs and the riches I possess by lady Di's, poor Strawberry may vie with much prouder collections.

Adieu, my good lord! When I fold up a letter I am ashamed of it—but it is your own fault. The last thing I should think of would be troubling your lordship with such insipid stuff, if you did not command it. Lady Strاتفورد will bear me testimony how often I have protested against it.

I am her ladyship's and your lordship's obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* The number of original drawings by lady Diana Beauclerc, at Strawberry-hill.

LETTER

LETTER XLVIII.

Strawberry-hill, August 29, 1786.

SINCE I received the honour of your lordship's last, I have been at Park-place for a few days. Lord and lady F—— C—— and Mrs. D—— were there. We went on the Thames to see the new bridge at Henley, and Mrs. D——'s colossal masks. There is not a sight in the island more worthy of being visited. The bridge is as perfect as if bridges were natural productions, and as beautiful as if it had been built for Wentworth-castle; and the masks, as if the Romans had left them here. We saw them in a fortunate moment; for the rest of the time was very cold and uncomfortable, and the evenings as chill as many we have had lately. In short, I am come to think that the beginning of an old ditty which passes for a collection of blunders, was really an old English pastoral, it is so descriptive of our climate:

Three children sliding on the ice
All on a summer's day—

I have been overwhelmed more than ever by visitants to my house. Yesterday I had count Oghinski, who was a pretender to the crown of Poland at the last election, and has been stripped of most of a vast estate. He had on a ring of the new king of Prussia—or I should have wished him joy on the death of one of the plunderers of his country.

It has long been my opinion that the out-pensioners of Bedlam are so numerous, that the shortest and cheapest way would be to confine in Moorfields the few that remain in their senses, who would then be safe; and let the rest go at large. They are the out-pensioners who are for destroying poor dogs! The whole canine race never did half so much mischief as lord George Gordon; nor even worry hares, but when hallooed on by men. As it is a persecution of animals, I do not love hunting; and what old writers mention as a commendation, makes me hate it the more, its being an image of war. Mercy on us! that destruction of any species should be a sport or a merit! What cruel unreflecting imps we are! Every body is unwilling to die, yet sacrifices the lives of others to momentary pastime, or to the still emptier vapour, fame! A hero or a sportsman who wishes for longer life,
is

is desirous of prolonging devastation. We shall be crammed, I suppose, with panegyrics and epitaphs on the king of Prussia—I am content that he can now have an epitaph. But, alas! the emperor will write one for him probably in blood! and, while he shuts up convents for the sake of population, will be stuffing hospitals with maimed soldiers, besides making thousands of widows!—I have just been reading a new published history of the colleges in Oxford by Anthony Wood, and there found a feature in a character that always offended me, that of archbishop Chicheley, who prompted Henry V. to the invasion of France, to divert him from squeezing the overgrown clergy. When that priest meditated founding All Souls, and “consulted his friends (who seem to have been honest men) what great matter of piety he had best perform to God in his old age, he was advised by them to build an hospital for the wounded and sick soldiers, that daily returned from the wars then had in France”—I doubt his grace’s friends thought as I do of his artifice—“But,” continues the historian, “*disliking those motions*, and valuing the welfare of the deceased more than the wounded and diseased, he resolved with himself to promote his design—which was, to have masses, said for the king, queen, and himself, &c. while living, and for their souls when dead.”—And that mummary the old foolish rogue thought more efficacious than ointments and medicines for the wretches he had made! And of the chaplains and clerks he instituted in that dormitory, one was to teach grammar, and another, prick-song—How history makes one shudder and laugh by turns!—But I fear I have wearied your lordship with my idle declamation, and you will repent having commanded me to send you more letters; and I can only plead that I am

Your (perhaps too) obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XLIX.

Strawberry-hill, July 28, 1787.

ST. SWITHIN is no friend to correspondence, my dear lord. There is not only a great sameness in his own proceedings, but he makes every body else dull—I mean, in the country, where one frets at its raining,
every

every day and all day. In town he is no more minded than the proclamation against vice and immorality. Still, though he has all the honours of the quarantaine, I believe it often rained for forty days long before St. Swithin was born, if ever born he was; and the proverb was coined and put under his patronage, because people observed that it frequently does rain for forty days together at this season. I remember lady Suffolk telling me, that lord Dyfart's great meadow had never been mowed but once in forty years without rain. I said, "all that that proved was, that rain was good for hay," as I am persuaded the climate of a country and its productions are suited to each other. Nay, rain is good for haymakers too, who get more employment the oftener the hay is made over again. I do not know who is the saint that presides over thunder; but he has made an unusual quantity in this chill summer, and done a great deal of serious mischief, though not a fiftieth part of what lord George Gordon did seven years ago—and happily he is fled.

Our little part of the world has been quiet as usual. The duke of Queensberry has given a sumptuous dinner to the princesse de Lamballe—*et voilà tout*. I never saw her, not even in France. I have no particular penchant for sterling princes and princesses, much less for those of French plate.

The only entertaining thing I can tell your lordship from our district is, that old madam French, who lives close by the bridge at Hampton-court, where, between her and the Thames, she had nothing but one grass-plot of the width of her house, has paved that whole plot with black and white marble in diamonds, exactly like the floor of a church; and this curious metamorphosis of a garden into a pavement has cost her three hundred and forty pounds:—a tarpaulin she might have had for some shillings, which would have looked as well, and might easily have been removed. To be sure this exploit, and lord Dudley's obelisk *below* a hedge, with his canal at right angles with the Thames, and a sham bridge no broader than that of a violin, and *parallel* to the river¹, are not preferable to the monsters in clipt yews of our ancestors;

Bad taste expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.

¹ All these circumstances actually existed till within these five years, at the villa of the late viscount Dudley and Ward at Teddington.

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On the contrary, Mrs. Walsingham is making her house at Ditton (now baptized Boyle-farm) very orthodox. Her daughter miss Boyle^{*}, who has real genius, has carved three tablets in marble with boys designed by herself. Those sculptures are for a chimney-piece; and she is painting panels in grotesque for the library, with pilasters of glass in black and gold. Miss Crewe, who has taste too, has decorated a room for her mother's house at Richmond, which was lady Margaret Compton's, in a very pretty manner. How much more amiable the old women of the next age will be, than most of those we remember, who used to tumble at once from gallantry to devout scandal and cards! and revenge on the young of their own sex the desertion of ours. Now they are ingenious, they will not want amusement.

Adieu, my dear lord! I am most gratefully

Your lordship's very faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER L.

Strawberry-hill, Tuesday night, June 17, 1788.

I GUESS, my dear lord, and only guess that you are arrived at Wentworth-castle. If you are not, my letter will lose none of its bloom by waiting for you; for I have nothing fresh to tell you, and only write because you enjoined it. I settled in my Lilliputian towers but this morning. I wish people would come into the country on May-day, and fix in town the first of November. But as they will not, I have made up my mind; and having so little time left, I prefer London when my friends and society are in it, to living here alone, or with the weird sisters of Richmond and Hampton. I had additional reason now, for the streets are as green as the fields: we are burnt to the bone, and have not a lock of hay to cover our nakedness: oats are so dear, that I suppose they will soon be eaten at Brooks's and fashionable tables as a rarity. The drought has lasted so long, that for this fortnight I have been foretelling hay-making and winter, which June generally produces; but to-day is sultry, and I am not a pro-

^{*} Since married to lord Henry Fitzgerald.

phet worth a straw. Though not resident till now, I have flitted backwards and forwards, and last Friday came hither to look for a minute at a ball at Mrs. Walsingham's at Ditton; which would have been very pretty, for she had stuck coloured lamps in the hair of all her trees and bushes, if the east wind had not danced a reel all the time by the side of the river.

Mr. Conway's play¹, of which your lordship has seen some account in the papers, has succeeded delightfully both in representation and applause. The language is most genteel, though translated from verse; and both prologue and epilogue are charming. The former was delivered most justly and admirably by lord Derby, and the latter with inimitable spirit and grace by Mrs. Damer. Mr. Merry and Mrs. Bruce played excellently too.—But general Conway, Mrs. Damer, and every body else are drowned by Mr. Sheridan, whose renown has engrossed all fame's tongues and trumpets². Lord Townshend said he should be sorry were he forced to give a vote directly on Hastings, before he had time to cool; and one of the peers saying the speech had not made the same impression on him, the marquis replied, a seal might be finely cut, and yet not be in fault for making a bad impression.

I have, you see, been forced to send your lordship what scraps I brought from town: the next four months, I doubt, will reduce me to my old sterility; for I cannot retail French gazettes, though as a good Englishman bound to hope they will contain a civil war. I care still less about the double imperial campaign, only hoping that the poor dear Turks will heartily beat both emperor and empress. If the first Ottomans could be punished, they deserved it—but the present possessors have as good prescription on their side as any people in Europe. We ourselves are Saxons, Danes, Normans—our neighbours are Franks, not Gauls—who the rest are, Goths, Gepidæ, Heruli, Mr. Gibbon knows—and the Dutch usurped the estates of herrings, turbots, and other marine indigenæ.—Still, though I do not wish the hair of a Turk's beard hurt, I do not say that it would not be

¹ A comedy translated from L'Homme du Jour of Boissy. It was first acted at the private theatre at Richmond-house, and afterwards at Drury-lane.

² From the speech he made in Westminster-hall, on bringing the charge of cruelty to the Begums of the province of Benares, in the trial of Mr. Hastings.

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amusing to have Constantinople taken—merely as a lusty event—for neither could I live to see Athens revive, nor have I much faith in two such bloody-minded vultures, cock and hen, as Catherine and Joseph, conquering for the benefit of humanity; nor does my christianity admire the propagation of the gospel by the mouth of cannon. What desolation of peasants and their families by the episodes of forage and quarters!—Oh! I wish Catherine and Joseph were brought to Westminster-hall and worried by Sheridan! I hope too, that the poor Begums are alive to hear of his speech—it will be some comfort, though I doubt nobody thinks of restoring them a quarter of a lac!

Adieu, my dear lord!

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LI.

Strawberry-hill, August 2, 1788.

MATTER for a letter, alas! my dear lord, I have none—but *about* letters I have great news to tell your lordship, only may the goddesses of post-offices grant it be true! A miss S—— of Richmond, who is at Paris, writes to Mrs. B——, that a baron de la Garde (I am sorry there are so many *a*'s in the genealogy of my story) has found in a *vieille armoire* five hundred more letters of madame de Sevigny, and that they will be printed, if the expence is not too great. I am in a taking lest they should not appear before I set out for the Elysian fields; for though the writer is one of the first personages I should enquire after on my arrival, I question whether St. Peter has taste enough to know where she lodges: he is more likely to be acquainted with St. Catherine of Sienna and St. Undecimillia; and therefore I had rather see the letters themselves. It is true I have no small doubt of the authenticity of the legend; and nothing will persuade me of its truth so much as the non-appearance of the letters—a melancholy kind of conviction. But I vehemently suspect some new coinage, like the letters of Ninon de l'Enclos, pope Ganganelli, and the princess Palatine. I have lately been reading some fragments of letters of the duchess of Orleans, which are certainly genuine, and contain some curious circumstances; for though she was a simple gossiping old gentlewoman, yet many little facts she could not help learning:

learning : and to give her her due, she was ready to tell all she knew. To our late queen she certainly did write often ; and her majesty, then only princess, was full as ready to pay her in her own coin : and a pretty considerable treaty of commerce for the exchange of scandal was faithfully executed between them ; infomuch that I remember to have heard forty years ago, that our gracious sovereign entrusted her royal highness of Orleans with an intrigue of one of her women of the bed-chamber, Mrs. S. to wit ; and the good duchess entrusted it to so many other dear friends, that at last it got into the Utrecht Gazette, and came over hither, to the signal edification of the court of Leicester-fields. This is an additional reason, besides the internal evidence, for my believing the letters genuine. This old dame was mother of the regent : and when she died, somebody wrote on her tomb, *Cy gist l'Oisiveté*. This came over too ; and nobody could expound it, till our then third princess, Caroline, unravelled it—Idleness is the mother of all vice.

I wish well enough to posterity to hope that dowager highnesses will imitate the practice, and write all the trifles that occupy their royal brains ; for the world so at least learns some true history, which their husbands never divulge ; especially if they are privy to their own history, which their ministers keep from them as much as possible. I do not believe the present king of France knows much more of what he, or rather his queen, is actually doing, than I do. I rather pity him ; for I believe he means well, which is not a common article of my faith.

I shall go about the end of this week to Park-place, where I expect to find the druidic temple from Jersey erected. How dull will the world be, if constant pilgrimages are not made thither ! where, besides the delight of the scenes, that temple, the rude great arch, lady A——'s needle-works, and Mrs. D——'s Thame and Isis on Henley-bridge, with other of her sculptures, make it one of the most curious spots in the island, and unique. I want to have Mr. Conway's comedy acted there ; and then the father, mother and daughter would exhibit a theatre of arts as uncommon. How I regret that your lordship did not hear Mrs. D—— speak the epilogue !

I am, my dear lord, your lordship's most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LII.

Strawberry-hill, September 12, 1788.

MY late fit of gout, though very short, was a very authentic one, my dear lord, and the third I have had since Christmas. Still, of late years I have suffered so little pain, that I can justly complain of nothing but the confinement and the debility of my hands and feet, which however I can still use to a certain degree; and as I enjoy such good spirits and health in the intervals, I look upon the gout as no enemy: yet I know it is like the compacts said to be made with the devil (no kind comparison to a friend!), who showers his favours on the contractors, but is sure to seize and carry them off at last.

I would not say so much of myself, but in return to your lordship's obliging concern for me—yet, insignificant as the subject, I have no better in bank—and if I plume myself on the tolerable state of my outward man, I doubt your lordship finds that age does not treat my interior so mildly as the gout does the other. If my letters, as you are pleased to say, used to amuse you, you must perceive how insipid they are grown, both from my decays, and from the little intercourse I have with the world. Nay, I take care not to aim at false vivacity: what do the attempts of age at liveliness prove, but its weakness? What the Spectator said wittily, ought to be practised in sober sadness by old folks: when he was dull, he declared it was by design. So far, to be sure, we ought to observe it, as not to affect more spirits than we possess. To be purposely stupid, would be forbidding our correspondents to continue the intercourse; and I am so happy in enjoying the honour of your lordship's friendship, that I will be content (if you can be so) with my natural inanity, without studying to increase it.

I have been at Park-place, and assure your lordship that the Druidic temple vastly more than answers my expectation. Small it is, no doubt, when you are within the inclosure, and but a chapel of ease to Stonehenge; but Mr. Conway has placed it with so much judgment, that it has a lofty effect, and infinitely more than it could have had, if he had yielded to Mrs. D——'s and my opinion, who earnestly begged to have it placed within the inclosure of the home-grounds. It now stands on the ridge of the high
hill

hill without, backed by the horizon, and with a grove on each side at a little distance; and being exalted beyond and above the range of firs that climb up the sides of the hill from the valley, wears all the appearance of an ancient castle, whose towers are only shattered, not destroyed; and devout as I am to old castles, and small taste as I have for the ruins of ages absolutely barbarous, it is impossible not to be pleased with so very rare an antiquity so absolutely perfect, and it is difficult to prevent visionary ideas from improving a prospect.

If, as lady Anne Conolly told your lordship, I have had a great deal of company, you must understand it of my house, not of me; for I have very little. Indeed, last Monday both my house and I were included. The duke of York sent me word the night before, that he would come and see it, and of course I had the honour of showing it myself. He said, and indeed it seemed so, that he was much pleased; at least, I had every reason to be satisfied; for I never saw any prince more gracious and obliging, nor heard one utter more personally kind speeches.

I do not find that *her grace* the countess of Bristol's^{*} will is really known yet. They talk of two wills—to be sure, in her double capacity; and they say she has made three coheiresses to her jewels, the empress of Russia, lady Salisbury, and the whore of Babylon. The first of those legatees, I am not sorry, is in a piteous scrape: I like the king of Sweden no better than I do her and the emperor: but it is good that two destroyers should be punished by a third, and that two crocodiles should be gnawed by an insect. Thank God! *we* are not only at peace, but in full plenty—nay, and in full beauty too. Still better; though we have had rivers of rain, it has not, contrary to all precedent, washed away our warm weather. September, a month I generally dislike for its irresolute mixture of warm and cold, has hitherto been peremptorily fine. The apple and walnut trees bend down with fruit as in a poetical description of Paradise.

I am with great gratitude, my dear lord,

Your lordship's devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

^{*} The duchess of Kingston.

LETTER

LETTER LIII.

Strawberry-hill, June 26, 1790.

MY DEAR LORD,

I DO not forget your lordship's commands, though I do recollect my own inability to divert you. Every year at my advanced time of life would make more reasonable my plea of knowing nothing worth repeating, especially at this season. The general topic of elections is the last subject to which I could listen: there is not one about which I care a straw: and I believe your lordship quite as indifferent. I am not much more *au fait* of war or peace; I hope for the latter, nay and expect it, because it is not yet war. Pride and anger do not deliberate to the middle of the campaign; and I believe even the great incendiaries are more intent on making a good bargain than on saving their honour. If they save lives, I care not who is the better politician: and as I am not to be their judge, I do not inquire what false weights they fling into the scales. Two-thirds of France, who are not so humble as I, seem to think they can entirely new-model the world with metaphysical compasses, and hold that no injustice, no barbarity need to be counted in making the experiment. Such legislators are sublime empirics, and in their universal benevolence have very little individual sensibility.—In short, the result of my reflections on what has passed in Europe for these latter centuries is, that tyrants have no consciences, and reformers no feeling—and the world suffers both by the plague and by the cure.—What oceans of blood were Luther and Calvin the authors of being spilt! The late French government was detestable—yet I still doubt whether a civil war will not be the consequence of the revolution—and then what may be the upshot? Brabant was grievously provoked—is it sure that it will be emancipated? For how short a time do people who set out on the most just principles, advert to their first springs of motion, and retain consistency? Nay, how long can promoters of revolutions be sure of maintaining their own ascendant? They are like projectors, who are commonly ruined, while others make fortunes on the foundation laid by the inventors.

I am always your lordship's very devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER LIV.

Strawberry-hill, Aug. 12, 1790.

I MUST not pretend any longer, my dear lord, that this region is void of news and diversions. Oh! we can innovate as well as neighbouring nations. If an earl S——, though he cannot be a tribune, is ambitious of being a plebeian, he may without a law be as vulgar as heart can wish; and though we have not a national assembly to lay the axe to the root of nobility, the peerage have got a precedent for laying themselves in the kennel. Last night the earl of Barrymore was so humble as to perform a buffoon dance and act Scaramouch in a pantomime at Richmond for the benefit of Edwin, jun. the comedian: and I, like an old fool, but calling myself a philosopher that loves to study human nature in all its disguises, went to see the performance.

Mr. Gray thinks that some Milton or some Cromwell may be lost to the world under the garb of a ploughman. Others may suppose that some excellent jack pudding may lie hidden under red velvet and ermine. I cannot say that by the experiment of last night the latter hypothesis has been demonstrated, any more than the inverse proposition in France, where, though there seem to be many as bloody-minded rascals as Cromwell, I can discover none of his abilities. They have settled nothing like a constitution; on the contrary, they seem to protract every thing but violence, as much as they can, in order to keep their louis a day, which is more than two-thirds of the assembly perhaps ever saw in a month—I do not love legislators that pay themselves so amply! They might have had as good a constitution as twenty-four millions of people could comport. As they have voted an army of an hundred and fifty thousand men, I know what their constitution will be, after passing through a civil war—in short, I detest them; they have done irreparable injury to liberty, for no monarch will ever summon *états* again; and all the real service that will result from their fury will be, that every king in Europe, for these twenty or perhaps thirty years to come, will be content with the prerogative he has, without venturing to augment it.

The empress of Russia has thrashed the king of Sweden; and the king of Sweden has thrashed the empress of Russia. I am more glad that both are
beaten

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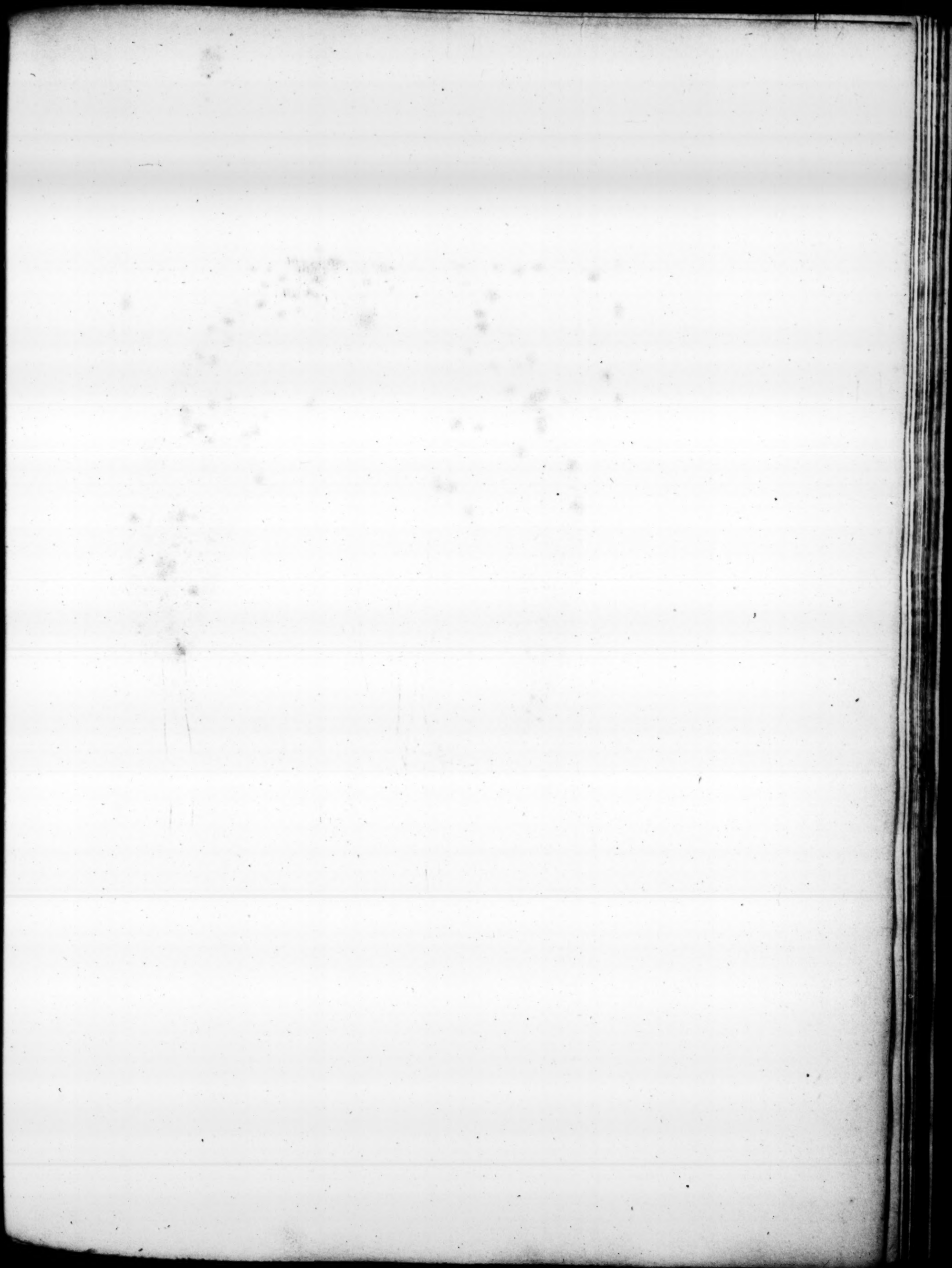
beaten than that either is victorious; for I do not, like our newspapers, and such admirers, fall in love with heroes and heroines who make war without a glimpse of provocation. I do like *our* making peace, whether we had provocation or not.

I am forced to deal in European news, my dear lord, for I have no homespun.

I don't think my whole inkhorn could invent another paragraph, and therefore I will take my leave with (your lordship knows) every kind wish for your health and happiness.

Your most devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.





Henth. Sculp.

Miss Sepel afterwards Lady Hervey.

Published as the Act directs May 1st 1798, by G.G. & J. Robinson. Paternoster Row. London.

L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE RIGHT HON. MARY LEPEL LADY HERVEY,

From the Year 1758 to the Year 1766.

VOL. V.

U u u

J. E. T. B. R. S.

THE HON. HORACE WALLACE

TO THE HON. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

From the Year 1954 to the Year 1960

1961

Vol. 1

L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE RIGHT HON. MARY LEPEL LADY HERVEY¹,

From the Year 1758 to the Year 1766.

L E T T E R I.

TO THE RIGHT HON. MARY LEPEL LADY HERVEY.

Strawberry-hill, September 13, 1757.

MADAM,

AFTER all the trouble your ladyship has been so good as to take voluntarily, you will think it a little hard that I should presume to give you more ; but it is a cause, madam, in which I know you feel, and I can suggest new motives to your ladyship's zeal. In short, madam, I am on the crisis of losing mademoiselle de l'Enclos's picture, or of getting both that and her letters to lady Sandwich². I inclose lord Sandwich's letter to me, which

¹ Lady Hervey was only daughter of brigadier-general Nicholas Lepel. She was maid of honour to queen Caroline, and was married in 1720 to John lord Hervey, eldest son of John earl of Bristol, by whom she had four sons and four daughters.—Lord Hervey was vice-chamberlain and privy-seal to George II. and well known by his eloquence, writings, duel with Mr. Pulteney, and the satires of Pope. He died in 1744. Lady Hervey died of the gout in 1767.

² Daughter to the famous Wilmot earl of Rochester.—She had been long settled at Paris, and died there in the year 1755. E.

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will explain the whole. Madame Greffini, I suppose, is madame Graphigny; whom some of your ladyship's friends, if not yourself, must know; and she might be of use, if she could be trusted not to detain so tempting a treasure as the letters. From the effects being sealed up, I have still hopes; greater, from the goodness your ladyship had in writing before. Don't wonder, madam, at my eagerness: besides a good quantity of natural impatience, I am now interested as an editor and printer. Think what pride it would give me to print original letters of Ninon at Strawberry-hill! If your ladyship knows any farther means of serving me, *of serving yourself*, good Mr. *Welldone*, as the widow Lackit says in *Oroonoko*, I need not doubt your employing them. Your ladyship and I are of a religion, with regard to certain saints, that inspires more zeal than such trifling temptations as persecution and faggots infuse into bigots of other sects. I think a cause like ours might communicate ardour even to my lady Stafford¹. If she will assist in recovering *Notre Dame des Amours*, I will add St. Raoul² to my calendar.

I am hers and your ladyship's

Most obedient and faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER II.

Arlington-street, October 17, 1758.

YOUR ladyship, I hope, will not think that such a strange thing as my own picture seems of consequence enough to me to write a letter about it: but obeying your commands does seem so; and lest you should return and think I had neglected it, I must say that I have come to town three several times on purpose, but Mr. Ramsay (I will forgive him) has been constantly out of town—So much for that.

¹ Her maiden name was Cantillon. At the death of her husband, the title went to lord Stafford's uncle, who dying without children, the earldom became extinct, but the barony fell into abeyance among the three sisters of the nephew, lady Anastasia and lady Anne Stafford, and lady Mary Chabot: the two first were nuns.—Lady

Mary married the father of the present duc de Chabot.

One of the nuns is still living. At her death the barony devolves to sir William Jerningham, of Copley in Norfolk, through his mother, who was niece to the late earl of Stafford.

² A favourite cat of lady Stafford's. E.

I would

I would have sent you word that the king of Portugal coming along the road at midnight, which was in his own room at noon, his foot slipped, and three balls went through his body; which, however, had no other consequence than giving him a stroke of a palsy, of which he is quite recovered except being dead¹. Some indeed are so malicious as to say, that the Jesuits, who are the most conscientious men in the world, murdered him, because he had an intrigue with another man's wife: but all these histories I supposed your ladyship knew better than me, as, till I came to town yesterday, I imagined you was returned. For my own part, about whom you are sometimes so good as to interest yourself, I am as well as can be expected after the murder of a king, and the death of a person of the next consequence to a king, the master of the ceremonies, poor sir Clement², who is supposed to have been suffocated by my lady M——'s³ kissing hands.

This will be a melancholy letter, for I have nothing to tell your ladyship but tragical stories. Poor Dr. Shawe⁴ being sent for in great haste to Claremont—(it seems the duchess had caught a violent cold by a hair of her own whisker getting up her nose and making her sneeze)—the poor doctor, I say, having eaten a few mushrooms before he set out, was taken so ill, that he was forced to stop at Kingston; and, being carried to the first apothecary's, prescribed a medicine for himself which immediately cured him. This catastrophe so alarmed the duke of Newcastle, that he immediately ordered all the mushroom-beds to be destroyed, and even the toadstools in the park did not escape scalping in this general massacre. What I tell you is literally true. Mr. Stanley, who dined there last Sunday, and is not partial against that court, heard the edict repeated, and confirmed it to me last night. And a voice of lamentation was heard at Ramah in Claremont, *Chloe*⁵ weeping for *her* mushrooms, and they are not!

After all these important histories, I would try to make you smile, if I was not afraid you would resent a little freedom taken with a great name.—May I venture?

¹ Alluding to the incoherent stories told at the time of the assassination of the king of Portugal.

E.

² Sir Clement Cotterel.

³ She had been a common woman.

⁴ Physician to the duke and duchess of Newcastle.

⁵ The duke of Newcastle's cook.

Why

518 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

Why Taylor the quack calls himself *chevalier*,
'Tis not easy a reason to render ;
Unless blinding eyes, that he thinks to make clear,
Demonstrates he's but a *pretender*.

A book has been left at your ladyship's house ; it is lord Whitworth's account of Russia. Monsieur Kniphaufen has promised me some curious anecdotes of the czarina Catherine—so my shop is likely to flourish.

I am your ladyship's most obedient servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER III.

Feb. 20, 1759.

I MET with this little book¹ t'other day by chance, and it pleased me so much, that I cannot help lending it to your ladyship, as I know it will amuse you from the same causes. It contains many of those important truths which history is too proud to tell, and too dull from not telling.

Here Grignon's soul the living canvas warms ;
Here fair Fontange assumes unfading charms :
Here Mignard's pencil bows to female wit ;
Louis rewards, but ratifies Fayette :
The philosophic duke, and painter too,
Thought from her thoughts—from her ideas drew.

LETTER IV.

POOR ROBIN'S ALMANACK.

Saturday, Nov. 3d.
1759.

Thick fogs, and some wet.
Go not out of town. Gouts and rheumatisms are abroad. Warm clothes, good fires, and a room full of pictures, glasses, and scarlet damask, are the best physic.

¹ "Divers portraits de quelques personnages de la cour" [de Louis XIV.] by madame de la Fayette. E.

In short, for fear your ladyship should think of Strawberry on Saturday, I can't help telling you that I am to breakfast at Peterham that day with Mr. Fox and lady Caroline, lord and lady Waldegrave. How did you like the farce? George Selwyn says he wants to see High life below stairs, as he is weary of Low life above stairs.

L E T T E R V.

Jan. 12, 1760.

I AM very sorry your ladyship could doubt a moment on the cause of my concern yesterday. I saw you much displeased at what I had said; and I felt so innocent of the least intention of offending you, that I could not help being struck at my own ill-fortune, and with the sensation raised by finding you mix great goodness with great severity.

I am naturally very impatient under praise; I have reflected enough on myself to know I don't deserve it; and with this consciousness you ought to forgive me, madam, if I dreaded that the person whose esteem I valued the most in the world, should think that I was fond of what I know is not my due. I meant to express this apprehension as respectfully as I could, but my words failed me—a misfortune not too common to me, who am apt to say too much, not too little! Perhaps it is that very quality which your ladyship calls wit, and I call tinsel, for which I dread being praised. I wish to recommend myself to you by more essential merits—and if I can only make you laugh, it will be very apt to make me as much concerned as I was yesterday. For people to whose approbation I am indifferent, I don't care whether they commend or condemn me for my wit; in the former case they will not make me admire myself for it, in the latter they can't make me think but what I have thought already. But for the few whose friendship I wish, I would fain have them see, that under all the idleness of my spirits there are some very serious qualities, such as warmth, gratitude and sincerity, which ill returns may render useless or may make me lock up in my breast, but which will remain there while I have a being.

Having drawn you this picture of myself, madam, a subject I have to say so much upon, will not your good nature apply it as it deserves, to what passed yesterday? Won't you believe that my concern flowed from being
disappointed?

disappointed at having offended one whom I ought by so many ties to try to please, and whom, if I ever meant any thing, I had meant to please? I intended you should see how much I despise wit, if I have any, and that you should know my heart was void of vanity and full of gratitude. They are very few I desire should know so much; but my passions act too promptly and too naturally, as you saw, when I am with those I really love, to be capable of any disguise. Forgive me, madam, this tedious detail; but of all people living I cannot bear that you should have a doubt about me.

LETTER VI.

Strawberry-hill, October 1, 1762.

MADAM,

I HOPE you are as free from any complaint, as I am sure you are full of joy. Nobody partakes more of your satisfaction for Mr. Hervey's¹ safe return²; and now he is safe, I trust you enjoy his glory: for this is a wicked age; you are one of those un-Lacedæmonian mothers, that are not content unless your children come off with all their limbs. A Spartan countess would not have had the confidence of my lady Albemarle to appear in the drawing-room without at least one of her sons being knocked on the head³. However, pray, madam, make my compliments to her; one must conform to the times, and congratulate people for being happy, if they like it. I know one matron, however, with whom I may condole; who, I dare swear, is miserable that she has not one of her acquaintance in affliction, and to whose door she might drive with all her sympathising greyhounds to inquire after her, and then to Hawkins's, and then to Graham's, and then cry over a ball of rags that she is picking, and be so sorry for poor Mrs. Such an one, who has lost an only son!

When your ladyship has hung up all your trophies, I will come and make you a visit. There is another ingredient I hope not quite disagreeable that

¹ General William Hervey, youngest son of lady Hervey. Havannah. The eldest, lord Albemarle, commanded the land forces; the second, afterwards lord Keppel, was then captain of a man

² From the Havannah.

³ Lady Anne Lenox, countess of Albemarle, had three sons present at the taking of the ment. E.

Mr.

TO THE RT. HON. MARY LEPEL LADY HERVEY. 521

Mr. Hervey has brought with him, un-Lacedæmonian too, but admitted among the other vices of our system. If besides glory and riches they have brought us peace, I will make a bonfire myself, though it should be in the mayoralty of that virtuous citizen Mr. Beckford. Adieu, madam!

Your ladyship's most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VII.

Strawberry-hill, October 31, 1762:

MADAM,

IT is too late, I fear, to attempt acknowledging the honour madame de Chabot¹ does me; and yet, if she is not gone, I would fain not appear ungrateful. I do not know where she lives, or I would not take the liberty again of making your ladyship my penny-post. If she is gone, you will throw my note into the fire.

Pray, madam, blow your nose with a piece of flannel—not that I believe it will do you the least good—but, as all wise folks think it becomes them to recommend nursing and flannelling the gout, I imitate them; and I don't know any other way of lapping it up, when it appears in the person of a running cold. I will make it a visit on Tuesday next, and shall hope to find it tolerably vented.

I am, madam, your ladyship's most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. You must tell me all the news, when I arrive, for I know nothing of what is passing. I have only seen in the papers, that the cock and hen doves² that went to Paris not having been able to make peace, there is a third dove³ just flown thither to help them.

¹ Lady Mary Chabot, daughter to the earl of Stafford.

² The duke and duchess of Bedford.

³ Mr. Hans Stanley.

LETTER VIII.

November 10, 1764.

SOH! madam, you expect to be thanked, because you have done a very obliging thing! But I won't thank you, and I won't be obliged. It is very hard one can't come into your house and commend any thing, but you must recollect it and send it after one! I will never dine in your house again; and when I do, I will like nothing; and when I do, I will commend nothing; and when I do, you shan't remember it.—You are very grateful indeed to providence that gave you so good a memory, to stuff it with nothing but bills of fare of what every body likes to eat and drink! I wonder you are not ashamed—I wonder you are not ashamed! Do you think there is no such thing as gluttony of the memory?—You a christian! A pretty account you will be able to give of yourself!—Your fine folks in France may call this friendship and attention, perhaps—but sure, if I was to go to the devil, it should be for thinking of nothing but myself, not of others from morning to night. I would send back your temptations; but, as I will not be obliged to you for them, verily I shall retain them to punish you, ingratitude being a proper chastisement for sinful friendliness.

Thine in the spirit,

PILCHARD WHITFIELD.

LETTER IX.

Strawberry-hill, June 11, 1765.

I AM almost as much ashamed, madam, to plead the true cause of my faults towards your ladyship, as to have been guilty of any neglect. It is scandalous at my age to have been carried backwards and forwards to balls and suppers and parties by very young people, as I was all last week. My resolutions of growing old and staid, are admirable: I wake with a sober plan, and intend to pass the day with my friends—then comes the duke of R——, and hurries me down to Whitehall to dinner—then the duchess of G—— sends for me to loo in Upper Grosvenor-street—before I can

* Lady Hervey, it is supposed, had sent Mr. Walpole some potted pilchards. E.

get thither, I am begged to step to Kensington to give Mrs. Anne Pitt my opinion about a bow window—after the loo, I am to march back to Whitehall to supper—and after that, am to walk with miss Pelham on the terrafs till two in the morning, because it is moonlight and her chair is not come. All this does not help my morning laziness; and by the time I have breakfasted, fed my birds and my squirrels and dressed, there is an auction ready.—In short, madam, this was my life last week, and is I think every week, with the addition of forty episodes.—Yet, ridiculous as it is, I send it your ladyship, because I had rather you should laugh at me than be angry. I cannot offend you in intention, but I fear my sins of omission are equal to many a good christian's. Pray forgive me. I really will begin to be between forty and fifty by the time I am fourscore: and I truly believe I shall bring my resolutions within compass; for I have not chalked out any particular business that will take me above forty years more; so that, if I do not get acquainted with the grandchildren of all the present age, I shall lead a quiet sober life yet before I die.

As Mr. Bateman's is the kingdom of flowers, I must not wish to send you any; else, madam, I could load waggons with acacias, honeysuckles, and feringas. Madame de Juliac, who dined here yesterday, owned that the climate and odours equalled Languedoc. I fear the want of rain made the turf put her in mind of it too. Monsieur de Caraman entered into the Gothic spirit of the place, and really seemed pleased: which was more than I expected; for, between you and me, madam, our friends the French have seldom eyes for any thing they have not been used to see all their lives.

I beg my warmest compliments to your host and lord Ilchester. I wish your ladyship all pleasure and health, and am, notwithstanding my idleness,

Your most faithful and devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER X.

Arlington-street, September 3, 1765.

THE trouble your ladyship has given yourself so immediately, makes me, as I always am, ashamed of putting you to any. There is no persuading you to oblige moderately. Do you know, madam, that I shall tremble to deliver the letters you have been so good as to send me? If you have said half so much of me, as you are so partial as to think of me, I shall be undone. Limited as I know myself, and hampered in bad French, how shall I keep up to any character at all? Madame d'Aiguillon and madame Geoffrin will never believe that I am the true messenger; but will conclude that I have picked Mr. Walpole's portmanteau's pocket. I wish only to present myself to them as one devoted to your ladyship: that character I am sure I can support in any language, and it is the one to which they would pay the most regard—Well! I don't care, madam—it is your reputation is at stake more than mine; and if they find me a simpleton that don't know how to express myself, it will all fall upon you at last. If your ladyship will risk that, I will, if you please, thank you for a letter to madame d'Egmont too: I long to know your friends, though at the hazard of their knowing yours. Would I were a *jolly* old man, to match, at least, in that respect, your *jolly* old woman!—But, alas! I am nothing but a poor worn-out-rag, and fear, when I come to Paris, that I shall be forced to pretend that I have had the gout in my understanding. My spirits, such as they are, will not bear translating; and I don't know whether I shall not find it the wisest part I can take to fling myself into geometry or commerce, or agriculture, which the French now esteem, don't understand, and think we do. They took George Selwyn for a poet, and a judge of planting and dancing; why may not I pass for a learned man and a philosopher? If the worst comes to the worst, I will admire Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison; and declare that I have not a friend in the world that is not like my lord Edward Bonston, though I never knew a character like it in my days, and hope I never shall; nor do I think Rousseau need to have gone so far out of his way to paint a disagreeable Englishman.

If you think, madam, this folly is not very favourable to the country I am going to; recollect, that all I object to them is their quitting their own agree-

* The duchesse d'Aiguillon.

able style, to take up the worst of ours. Heaven knows, we are unpleasing enough; but in the first place they don't understand us; and in the next, if they did, so much the worse for them. What have they gained by leaving Moliere, Boileau, Corneille, Racine, La Rochefoucault, Crebillon, Marivaux, Voltaire, &c. No nation can be another nation. We have been clumsily copying them for these hundred years, and are not we grown wonderfully like them? Come, madam, you like what I like of them; I am going thither, and you have no aversion to going thither—but own the truth; had not we both rather go thither fourscore years ago? Had you rather be acquainted with the charming madame Scarron, or the canting madame de Maintenon? with Louis XIV. when the Montespan governed him, or when Pere le Tellier? I am very glad when folks go to heaven, though it is after another body's fashion; but I wish to converse with them when they are themselves. I abominate a conqueror; but I do not think he makes the world much compensation, by cutting the throats of his protestant subjects to atone for the massacres caused by his ambition.

The result of all this dissertation, madam, for I don't know how to call it a letter, is, that I shall look for Paris in the midst of Paris, and shall think more of the French that have been than the French that are, except of a few of your friends and mine. Those I know, I admire and honour, and I am sure I will trust to your ladyship's taste for the others; and if they had no other merit, I can but like those that will talk to me of you. They will find more sentiment in me on that chapter, than they can miss parts; and I flatter myself that the one will atone for the other.

I am, madam, your ladyship's

Most obliged and most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XI.

Paris, September 14, 1765.

I AM but two days old here, madam, and I doubt I wish I was really so, and had my life to begin, to live it here. You see how just I am, and ready
to

to make amende honorable to your ladyship. Yet I have seen very little. My lady Hertford has cut me to pieces, and thrown me into a caldron with taylors, periwig-makers, snuff-box-wrights, milliners, &c. which really took up but little time; and I am come out quite new, with every thing but youth. The journey recovered me with magic expedition. My strength, if mine could ever be called strength, is returned; and the gout going off in a minuet step. I will say nothing of my spirits, which are indecently juvenile, and not less improper for my age than for the country where I am; which, if you will give me leave to say it, has a thought too much gravity. I don't venture to laugh or talk nonsense, but in English.

Madame Geoffrin came to town but last night, and is not visible on Sundays; but I hope to deliver your ladyship's letter and packet to-morrow. Mesdames d'Aiguillon, d'Egmont, and Chabot, and the duc de Nivernois are all in the country. Madame de Boufflers is at L'Isle Adam, whither my lady Hertford is gone to-night to sup, for the first time, being no longer chained down to the incivility of an embassadress. She returns after supper; an irregularity that frightens me, who have not yet got rid of all my barbarisms. There is one, alas! I never shall get over—the dirt of this country: it is melancholy after the purity of Strawberry! The narrowness of the streets, trees clipped to resemble brooms, and planted on pedestals of chalk, and a few other points, do not edify me. The French opera, which I have heard to-night, disgusted me as much as ever; and the more for being followed by the Devin de Village, which shows that they can sing without cracking the drum of one's ear. The scenes and dances are delightful: the Italian comedy charming. Then I am in love with treillage and fountains, and will prove it at Strawberry. Chantilly is so exactly what it was when I saw it above twenty years ago, that I recollected the very position of monsieur le Duc's chair and the gallery. The latter gave me the first idea of mine; but, presumption apart, mine is a thousand times prettier. I gave my lord Herbert's compliments to the statue of his friend the constable¹; and, waiting some time for the concierge, I called out, *Où est Vatel*²?

In short, madam, being as tired as one can be of one's own country, I

¹ The constable de Montmorency.—See Life of lord Herbert of Cherbury, page 67. which Louis XIV. made to the grand Condé at Chantilly, put an end to his existence because he feared the sea-fish would not arrive in time

² The maître d'hotel, who during the visit for one day's repast! E.

don't

don't say whether that is much or little, I find myself wonderfully disposed to like this—Indeed I wish I could wash it. Madame de Guerchy is all goodness to me; but that is not new. I have already been prevented by great civilities from madame de Bentheim and my old friend madame de Mirepoix; but am not likely to see the latter much, who is grown a most particular favourite of the king, and seldom from him. The dauphin is ill, and thought in a very bad way. I hope he will live, lest the theatres should be shut up. Your ladyship knows I never trouble my head about royalties, farther than it affects my own interest.—In truth, the way that princes affect my interest is not the common way.

I have not yet tapped the chapter of baubles, being desirous of making my revenues maintain me here as long as possible. It will be time enough to return to my parliament when I want money.

Mr. Hume, that is, *the Mode*, asked much about your ladyship. I have seen madame de Monaco, and think her very handsome, and extremely pleasing. The younger madame d'Egmont, I hear, disputes the palm with her; and madame de Brionne is not left without partisans. The nymphs of the theatres are *laides à faire peur*, which at my age is a piece of luck, like going into a shop of curiosities, and finding nothing to tempt one to throw away one's money.

There are several English here, whether I will or not. I certainly did not come for them, and shall connect with them as little as possible. The few I value, I hope sometimes to hear of. Your ladyship guesses how far that wish extends. Consider too, madam, that one of my unworthinesses is washed and done away, by the confession I made in the beginning of my letter.

I am, madam, your ladyship's

Most faithful and devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Paris, October 3, 1765.

STILL I have seen neither madame d'Egmont nor the duchesse d'Aiguillon, who are in the country; but the latter comes to Paris to-morrow. Madame Chabot I called on last night. She was not at home, but the hotel de Carnavalet¹ was; and I stopped on purpose to say an ave Maria before it. It is a very singular building, not at all in the French style, and looks like an ex voto raised to her honour by some of her foreign votaries. I don't think her honoured half enough in her own country. I shall burn a little incense before your cardinal's heart², madam, *à votre intention*.

I have been with madame Geoffrin several times, and think she has one of the best understandings I ever met, and more knowledge of the world. I may be charmed with the French, but your ladyship must not expect that they will fall in love with me. Without affecting to lower myself, the disadvantage of speaking a language worse than any idiot one meets, is insurmountable: the silliest Frenchman is eloquent to me, and leaves me embarrassed and obscure. I could name twenty other reasons, if this one was not sufficient. As it is, my own defects are the sole cause of my not liking Paris entirely: the constraint I am under from not being perfectly master of their language, and from being so much in the dark, as one necessarily must be, on half the subjects of their conversation, prevents my enjoying that ease for which their society is calculated. I am much amused, but not comfortable.

The duc de Nivernois is extremely good to me; he enquired much after your ladyship. So does colonel Drumgold. The latter complains; but both of them, especially the Duc, seem better than when in England. I met the duchesse de Coëffé this evening at madame Geoffrin's. She is pretty, with a great resemblance to her father, lively and good-humoured; not genteel.

Yesterday I went through all my presentations at Versailles. 'Tis very convenient to gobble up a whole royal family in an hour's time, instead of

¹ Madame de Sevigné's residence in Paris.

² The cardinal de Richlieu's heart at the Sorbonne.

being

being sacrificed one week at Leicester-house, another in Grosvenor-street, a third in Cavendish-square, &c. &c. &c. *La Reine* is *le plus grand roi du monde*¹, and talked much to me, and would have said more if I would have let her; but I was awkward, and shrunk back into the crowd. None of the rest spoke to me. The king is still much handsomer than his pictures, and has great sweetness in his countenance, instead of that farouche look which they give him. The mesdames are not beauties, and yet have something Bourbon in their faces. The dauphiness I approve the least of all: with nothing good-humoured in her countenance, she has a look and accent that made me dread lest I should be invited to a private party at loo with her². The poor dauphin is ghastly, and perishing before one's eyes.

Fortune bestowed upon me a much more curious sight than a set of princes; the wild beast of the Gevaudan, which is killed, and actually in the queen's anti-chamber. It is a thought less than a leviathan and the beast in the Revelations, and has not half so many wings and eyes and talons as I believe they have, or will have some time or other; this being possessed but of two eyes, four feet, and no wings at all. It is as like a wolf as a commissary in the late war, except, notwithstanding all the stories, that it has not devoured near so many persons. In short, madam, now it is dead and come, a wolf it certainly was, and not more above the common size than Mrs. C—— is. It has left a dowager and four young princes.

Mr. Stanley, who I hope will trouble himself with this, has been most exceedingly kind and obliging to me. I wish that, instead of my being so much in your ladyship's debt, you were a little in mine, and then I would beg you to thank him for me. Well, but as it is, why should not you, madam? He will be charmed to be so paid, and you will not dislike to please him. In short, I would fain have him know my gratitude; and it is hearing it in the most agreeable way, if expressed by your ladyship.

I am, madam, your most obliged and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Madame de Sevigné thus expresses herself of Louis XIV. after his having taken much notice of her at Versailles. See her Letters. E.

² He means, that she had a resemblance to the late princess Amelia. E.

LETTER XIII.

Paris, October 13, 1765.

HOW are the mighty fallen! Yes, yes, madam, I am as like the duc de Richelieu as two peas; but then they are two old withered grey peas. Do you remember the fable of Cupid and Death, and what a piece of work they made with hustling their arrows together? This is just my case: love might shoot at me, but it was with a gouty arrow. I have had a relapse in both feet, and kept my bed six days: but the fit seems to be going off; my heart can already go alone, and my feet promise themselves the mighty luxury of a cloth shoe in two or three days. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay^{*}, who are here, and are, alas! to carry this, have been of great comfort to me, and have brought their delightful little daughter, who is as quick as Ariel. Mr. Ramsay could want no assistance from me: what do we both exist upon here, madam, but your bounty and charity? When did you ever leave one of your friends in want of another? Madame Geoffrin came and sat two hours last night by my bed-side: I could have sworn it had been my lady Hervey, she was so good to me. It was with so much sense, information, instruction, and correction! The manner of the latter charms me. I never saw any body in my days that catches one's faults and vanities and impositions so quick, that explains them to one so clearly, and convinces one so easily. I never liked to be set right before! You cannot imagine how I taste it! I make her both my confessor and director, and begin to think I shall be a reasonable creature at last, which I had never intended to be. The next time I see her, I believe I shall say, "Oh! Common Sense, sit down: I have been thinking so and so; is not it absurd?"—for t'other sense and wisdom, I never liked them; I shall now hate them for her sake. If it was worth her while, I assure your ladyship she might govern me like a child.

The duc de Nivernois too is astonishingly good to me. In short, madam, I am going down hill, but the sun sets pleasingly. Your two other friends have been in Paris; but I was confined, and could not wait on them. I passed a whole evening with lady Mary Chabot most agreeably: she charged me over and over with a thousand compliments to your ladyship. For fights, alas! and pilgrimages, they have been cut short! I had destined the fine

^{*} Allan Ramsay, the painter.

days of October to excursions ; but you know, madam, what it is to reckon without one's host, the gout. It makes such a coward of me, that I shall be afraid almost of entering a church. I have lost too the Dumenil in Phedre and Merope, two of her principal parts, but I hope not irrecoverably.

Thank you, madam, for the Taliacotian extract : it diverted me much. It is true, in general I neither see nor desire to see our wretched political trash : I am sick of it up to the fountain-head. It was my principal motive for coming hither ; and had long been my determination, the first moment I should be at liberty, to abandon it all. I have acted from no views of interest ; I have shown I did not ; I have not disgraced myself—and I must be free. My comfort is, that, if I am blamed, it will be by *all* parties. A little peace of mind for the rest of my days is all I ask, to balance the gout.

I have writ to madame de Guerchy about your orange-flower water ; and I sent your ladyship two little French pieces that I hope you received. The uncomfortable posture in which I write will excuse my saying any more ; but it is no excuse against my trying to do any thing to please one, who always forgets pain when her friends are in question.

Your ladyship's faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XIV.

Paris, Nov. 21, 1765.

MADAME GEOFFRIN has given me a parcel for your ladyship with two knotting-bags, which I will send by the first opportunity that seems safe: but I hear of nothing but difficulties ; and shall, I believe, be saved from ruin myself, from not being able to convey any purchases into England. Thus I shall have made an almost fruitless journey to France, if I can neither sling away my money, nor preserve my health. At present, indeed, the gout is gone. I have had my house swept, and made as clean as I could—no very easy matter in this country ; but I live in dread of seven worse spirits entering in. The terror I am under of a new fit has kept me from almost seeing any thing. The damps and fogs are full as great and frequent here as in London ; but there is a little frost to-day, and I shall begin my devo-

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tions

tions to-morrow. It is not being fashionable to visit churches; but I am *de la vieille cour*; and I beg your ladyship to believe that I have no youthful pretensions. The duchess of Richmond tells me that they have made twenty foolish stories about me in England; and say, that my person is admired here. I cannot help what is said without foundation; but the French have neither lost their eyes, nor I my senses. A skeleton I was born—skeleton I am—and death will have no trouble in making me one. I have not made any alteration in my dress, and certainly did not study it in England. Had I had any such ridiculous thoughts, the gout is too sincere a monitor to leave one under any such error. Pray, madam, tell lord and lady Holland what I say: they have heard these idle tales; and they know so many of my follies, that I should be sorry they believed more of me than are true. If all arose from madame Geoffrin calling me in joke *le nouveau Richelieu*, I give it under my hand that I resemble him in nothing but wrinkles.

Your ladyship is much in the right to forbear reading politics. I never look at the political letters that come hither in the Chronicles. I was sick to death of them before I set out; and perhaps should not have stirred from home, if I had not been sick of them and all they relate to. If any body could write ballads and epigrams *à la bonne heure*! But dull personal abuse in prose is tiresome indeed—A serious invective against a pickpocket, or written by a pickpocket, who has so little to do as to read?

The dauphin continues languishing to his exit, and keeps every body at Fontainebleau. There is a little bustle now about the parliament of Bretagne; but you may believe, madam, that when I was tired of the squabbles at London, I did not propose to interest myself in quarrels at Hull or Liverpool. Indeed if the *duc de Chaulnes*¹ commanded at Rennes, or *Pomenars*² was sent to prison, I might have a little curiosity. You wrong me in thinking I quoted a text from my Saint³ ludicrously. On the contrary, I am so true a bigot, that, if she could have talked nonsense, I should, like any other bigot, believe she was inspired.

The season, and the emptiness of Paris, prevent any thing new from appearing. All I can send your ladyship is a very pretty logogriphe, made by the

¹ Governor of Brittany in the time of madame de Sevigné.

² See madame de Sevigné's Letters.

³ Madame de Sevigné.

old blind madame du Deffand, whom perhaps you know—certainly must have heard of. I sup there very often; and she gave me this last night—you must guess it.

Quoique je forme un corps, je ne suis qu'une idée;
Plus ma beauté vieillit, plus elle est décidée:
Il faut, pour me trouver, ignorer d'où je viens:
Je tiens tout de lui, qui réduit tout à rien^{*}.

Lady Mary Chabot inquires often after your ladyship. Your other two friends are not yet returned to Paris; but I have had several obliging messages from the duchesse d'Aiguillon.

It pleased me extremely, madam, to find no mention of your own gout in your letter. I always apprehend it for you, as you try its temper to the utmost, especially by staying late in the country, which you know it hates. Lord! it has broken my spirit so, that I believe it might make me leave Strawberry at a minute's warning. It has forbid me tea, and been obeyed; and I thought that one of the most difficult points to carry with me. Do, let us be well, madam, and have no gouty notes to compare!

I am your ladyship's most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XV.

Paris, November 28, 1765.

WHAT, another letter! Yes, yes, madam; though I must whip and spur, I must try to make my thanks keep up with your favours: for any other return, you have quite distanced me. This is to acknowledge the receipt of the duchess d'Aiguillon—you may set what sum you please against the debt. She is delightful, and has much the most of a woman of

* The word is *Noblesse*.

quality

quality of any I have seen, and more cheerfulness too; for, to show your ladyship that I am sincere, that my head is not turned, and that I retain some of my prejudices still, I avow that gaiety, whatever it was formerly, is no longer the growth of this country; and I will own too that Paris can produce women of quality that I should not call women of fashion: I will not use so ungentle a term as vulgar; but for their indelicacy, I could call it still worse. Yet with these faults, and the latter is an enormous one in my English eyes, many of the women are exceedingly agreeable—I cannot say so much for the men—always excepting the duc de Nivernois. You would be entertained, for a quarter of an hour, with his duchess—she is the duke of Newcastle properly placed, that is, chattering incessantly out of devotion, and making interest against the devil that she may dispose of bishoprics in the next world.

Madame d'Egmont is expected to-day, which will run me again into arrears. I don't know how it is—Yes, I do: it is natural to impose on bounty, and I am like the rest of the world: I am going to abuse your goodness, *because* I know nobody's so great. Besides being the best friend in the world, you are the best *commissinaire* in the world, madam: you understand from friendship to scissars. The inclosed model was trusted to me, to have two pair made as well as possible—but I really blush at my impertinence. However, all the trouble I mean to give your ladyship is, to send your groom of the chambers to bespeak them; and a pair besides of the common size for a lady, as well made as possible, for the honour of England's steel.

The two knotting-bags from madame Geoffrin went away by a clergyman two days ago; and I concerted all the tricks the doctor and I could think of, to elude the vigilance of the custom-house officers.

With this, I send your ladyship the *Orpheline leguée*: its intended name was the *Anglomanie*; my only reason for sending it; for it has little merit, and had as slender success, being acted but five times. However, there is nothing else new.

The dauphin continues in the same languishing and hopeless state, but
with

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with great coolness and firmness. Somebody gave him t'other day *The preparation for death*¹: he said, "C'est la nouvelle du jour."

I have nothing more to say, but what I have always to say, madam, from the beginning of my letters to the end, that I am

Your ladyship's most obliged and most devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

November 28, three o'clock.

Oh, madam, madam, madam, what do you think I have found since I wrote my letter this morning? I am out of my wits! Never was any thing like my luck, it never forsakes me! I have found count Grammont's picture! I believe I shall see company upon it, certainly keep the day holy. I went to the Grand Augustins to see the pictures of the reception of the knights of the holy ghost: they carried me into a chamber full of their portraits; I was looking for Bassompierre; my *laquais de louage* opened a door, and said, Here are more. One of the first that struck me was *Philibert comte de Grammont*! It is old, not at all handsome, but has a great deal of finessè in the countenance. I shall think of nothing now but having it copied.—If I had seen or done nothing else, I should be content with my journey hither.

LETTER XVI.

Paris, January 2, 1766.

WHEN I came to Paris, madam, I did not know that by New-Year's Day I should find myself in Siberia; at least as cold. There have not been two good days together since the middle of October.—However, I do not complain, as I am both well and well pleased, though I wish for a little of your sultry English weather, all French as I am. I have entirely left off dinners, and lead the life I always liked, of lying late in bed, and fitting

¹ The title of a French book of devotion.

up late. I am told of nothing but how contradictory this is to your ladyship's orders; but as I shall have dull dinners and triste evenings enough when I return to England, all your kindness cannot persuade me to sacrifice my pleasures here too. Many of my opinions are fantastic; perhaps this is one, that nothing produces gout like doing any thing one dislikes. I believe the gout, like a near relation, always visits one when one has some other plague. Your ladyship's dependence on the waters of Sunning-hill is, I hope, better founded; but in the mean time my system is full as pleasant.

Madame d'Aiguillon's goodness to me does not abate, nor madame Geoffrin's. I have seen but little of madame d'Egmont, who seems very good, and is universally in esteem. She is now in great affliction, having lost suddenly monsieur Pignatelli, the minister at Parma, whom she bred up, and whom she and her family had generously destined for her grand-daughter, an immense heiress. It was very delicate and touching what madame d'Egmont said to her daughter-in-law on this occasion:—"Vous voyez, ma chere, combien j'aime mes enfans d'adoption!" This daughter-in-law is delightfully pretty, and civil, and gay, and conversible, though not a regular beauty like madame de Monaco.

The bitterness of the frost deters me, madam, from all sights: I console myself with good company, and still more, with being absent from bad. Negative as this satisfaction is, it is incredibly great, to live in a town like this, and to be sure every day of not meeting one face one hates! I scarce know a positive pleasure equal to it.

Your ladyship and lord Holland shall laugh at me as much as you please for my dread of being thought *charming*; yet I shall not deny my panic, as surely nothing is so formidable as to have one's limbs on crutches and one's understanding in leading-strings. The prince of Conti laughed at me t'other day on the same account. I was complaining to the old blind charming madame du Deffand, that she preferred Mr. Crawford to me: "What," said the prince, "does not she love you?" "No, sir," I replied, "she likes me no better than if she had seen me."

Mr. Hume carries this letter and Rousseau to England. I wish the former may not repent having engaged with the latter, who contradicts and quarrels

quarrels with all mankind, in order to obtain their admiration. I think both his means and his end below such a genius. If I had talents like his, I should despise any suffrage below my own standard, and should blush to owe any part of my fame to singularities and affectations. But great parts seem like high towers erected on high mountains, the more exposed to every wind, and readier to tumble. Charles Townshend is blown round the compass; Rousseau insists that the north and south blow at the same time; and Voltaire demolishes the Bible to erect fatalism in its stead:—So compatible are the greatest abilities and greatest absurdities!

Madame d'Aiguillon gave me the inclosed letter for your ladyship. I wish I had any thing else to send you; but there are no new books, and the theatres are shut up for the dauphin's death, who, I believe, is the greatest loss they have had since Harry IV.

I am your ladyship's most faithful and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVII.

Paris, Saturday night, Jan. 11, 1766.

I HAVE just now, madam, received the scissars, by general Vernon, from Mr. Conway's office. Unluckily I had not received your ladyship's notification of them sooner, for want of a conveyance, and wrote to my servant to inquire of yours how they had been sent; which I fear may have added a little trouble to all you had been so good as to take, and for which I give you ten thousand thanks: but your ladyship is so exact and so friendly, that it almost discourages rather than encourages me. I cannot bring myself to think that ten thousand obligations are new letters of credit.

I have seen Mrs. F——, and her husband may be as happy as he will: I cannot help pitying him. She told me it is *colder* here than in England; and in truth I believe so: I blow the fire between every paragraph, and am quite cut off from all fights. The agreeableness of the evenings makes me some amends. I am just going to sup at madame d'Aiguillon's with

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madame

madame d'Egmont, and I hope madame de Brionne, whom I have not yet seen; but she is not very well, and it is doubtful. My last new passion, and I think the strongest, is the duchess de Choiseul. Her face is pretty, not very pretty; her person a little model. Cheerful, modest, full of attentions, with the happiest propriety of expression, and greatest quickness of reason and judgment, you would take her for the queen of an allegory: one dreads its finishing, as much as a lover, if she would admit one, would wish it should finish.—In short, madam, though *you* are the last person that will believe it, France is so agreeable, and England so much the reverse, that I don't know when I shall return. The civilities, the kindnesses, the honours I receive, are so many and so great, that I am continually forced to put myself in mind how little I am entitled to them, and how many of them I owe to your ladyship. I shall talk you to death at my return—Shall you bear to hear me tell you a thousand times over, that madame Geoffrin is the most rational woman in the world, and madame d'Aiguillon the most animated and most obliging?—I think you will—Your ladyship *can* endure the panegyric of your friends. If you should grow impatient to hear them commended, you have nothing to do but to come over. The best air in the world is that where one is pleased: Sunning waters are nothing to it. The frost is so hard, it is impossible to have the gout; and though the fountain of youth is not here, the fountain of age is, which comes to just the same thing. One is never old here, or never thought so. One makes verses as if one was but seventeen—for example:—

ON MADAME DE FORCALQUIER SPEAKING ENGLISH.

Soft sounds that steal from fair Forcalquier's lips,
 Like bee that murmuring the jafmin sips!
 Are these my native accents? None so sweet,
 So gracious, yet my ravish'd ears did meet.
 O pow'r of beauty! thy enchanting look
 Can melodize each note in nature's book.
 The roughest wrath of Russians, when they swear,
 Pronounc'd by thee, flows soft as Indian air;
 And dulcet breath, attemper'd by thine eyes,
 Gives British prose o'er Tuscan verse the prize.

You

You must not look, madam, for much meaning in these lines ; they were intended only to run smoothly, and to be easily comprehended by the fair scholar who is learning our language. Still less must you show them : they are not calculated for the meridian of London, where you know I dread being represented as a shepherd. Pray let them think that I am wrapped up in Canada bills, and have all the pamphlets sent over about the colonies and the stamp-act.

I am very sorry for the accounts your ladyship gives me of lord Holland. He talks, I am told, of going to Naples : one would do a great deal for health, but I question if I could buy it at that expence. If Paris would answer his purpose, I should not wonder if he came hither—but to live with Italians must be woeful, and would ipso facto make me ill. It is true I am a bad judge : I never tasted illness but the gout, which, tormenting as it is, I prefer to all other distempers : one knows the fit will end, will leave one quite well, and dispenses with the nonsense of physicians—and absurdity is more painful than pain : at least the pain of the gout never takes away my spirits, which the other does.

I have never heard from Mr. Chute this century, but am glad the gout is rather his excuse than the cause, and that it lies only in his pen. I am in too good humour to quarrel with any body—and consequently cannot be in haste to see England, where at least one is sure of being quarrelled with. If they vex me, I will come back hither directly : and I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that your ladyship will not blame me.

Your most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVIII.

Paris, February 3, 1766.

I HAD the honour of writing to your ladyship on the 4th and 12th of last month, which I only mention, because the latter went by the post, which I have found is not always a safe conveyance.

I am sorry to inform you, madam, that you will not see madame Geoffrin
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this year, as she goes to Poland in May. The king has invited her, promised her an apartment exactly in her own way, and that she shall see nobody but whom she chooses to see. This will not surprise you, madam; but what I shall add, will; though I must beg your ladyship not to mention it even to her, as it is an absolute secret here, as she does not know that I know it, and as it was trusted to me by a friend of yours. In short, there are thoughts of sending her with a public character, or at least with a commission from hence—a very extraordinary honour, and I think never bestowed but on the *marechale de Guébriant*¹. As the Duffons have been talked of, and as madame Geoffrin has enemies, its being known might prevent it; and it might make her uneasy that it was known. I should have told it to no mortal but your ladyship; but I could not resist giving you such a pleasure. In your answer, madam, I need not warn you not to specify what I have told you.

My favour here continues; and favour never displeases. To me too it is a novelty, and I naturally love curiosities. However, I must be looking towards home, and have perhaps only been treasuring up regret. At worst, I have filled my mind with a new set of ideas; some resource to a man who was heartily tired of his old ones. When I tell your ladyship that I play at whist, and can bear even French music, you will not wonder at any change in me. Yet I am far from pretending to like every body or every thing I see. There are some chapters on which I still fear we shall not agree; but I will do your ladyship the justice to own, that you have never said a syllable too much in behalf of the friends to whom you was so good as to recommend me. Madame d'Egmont, whom I have mentioned but little, is one of the best women in the world, and, though not at all striking at first, gains upon one much. Colonel Gordon, with this letter, brings you, madam, some more seeds from her. I have a box of pomatums for you from madame de Boufflers, which shall go by the next conveyance that offers. As he waits for my parcel, I can only repeat how much I am

Your ladyship's most obliged and faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Sent with the character of ambassador from Louis XIII. to the king of Poland. Mr. Walpole, in a subsequent letter, owns having been misinformed with respect to madame Geoffrin; no such plan having ever been really in agitation. E.

L E T T E R XIX.

Paris, March 10, 1766.

THERE are two points, madam, on which I must write to your ladyship, though I have been confined these three or four days with an inflammation in my eyes. My watchings and revellings had, I doubt, heated my blood, and prepared it to receive a stroke of cold, which in truth was amply administered. We were two-and-twenty at the marechale du Luxembourg's, and supped in a temple rather than in a hall. It is vaulted at top with gods and goddesses, and paved with marble; but the god of fire was not of the number.—However, as this is neither of my points, I shall say no more of it.

I send your ladyship lady Albemarle's box, which madame Geoffrin brought to me herself yesterday. I think it very neat and charming, and it exceeds the commission but by a guinea and half. It is lined with wood between the two golds, as the price and necessary size would not admit metal enough without, to leave it of any solidity.

The other point I am indeed ashamed to mention so late. I am more guilty than even about the scissars. Lord Hertford sent me word a fortnight ago, that an ensigncy was vacant, to which he should recommend Mr. Fitzgerald. I forgot both to thank him and to acquaint your ladyship, who probably know it without my communication. I have certainly lost my memory! This is so idle and young, that I begin to fear I have acquired something of *the fashionable man*, which I so much dreaded. Is it to England then that I must return to recover friendship and attention? I literally wrote to lord Hertford, and forgot to thank him. Sure I did not use to be so abominable! I cannot account for it; I am as black as ink, and must turn—*methodist*, to fancy that repentance can wash me white again. No, I will not; for then I may sin again, and trust to the same nostrum.

I had the honour of sending your ladyship the funeral sermon on the dauphin, and a tract to laugh at sermons:

Your bane and antidote are both before you.

The

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The first is by the archbishop of Toulouse¹, who is thought the first man of the clergy. It has some sense, no pathetic, no eloquence, and, I think, clearly no belief in his own doctrine. The latter is by the abbé Coyer, written lively, upon a single idea; and though I agree upon the inutility of the remedy he rejects, I have no better opinion of that he would substitute. Preaching has not failed, from the beginning of the world till to-day, because inadequate to the disease, but because the disease is incurable. If one preached to lions and tigers, would it cure them of thirsting for blood, and sucking it when they have an opportunity? No; but when they are whelped in the Tower, and both caressed and beaten, do they turn out a jot more tame when they are grown up? So far from it, all the kindness in the world, all the attention, cannot make even a monkey (that is no beast of prey) remember a pair of scissars or an ensigny.

Adieu, madam! and pray don't forgive me, till I have forgiven myself. I dare not close my letter with any professions; for could you believe them in one that you had so much reason to think

Your most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE?

LETTER XX.

Strawberry-hill, June 28, 1766.

IT is consonant to your ladyship's long-experienced goodness, to remove my error as soon as you could. In fact, the same post that brought madame d'Aiguillon's letter to you, brought me a confession from madame du Deffand of her guilt². I am not the less obliged to your ladyship for *informing* against the true criminal. It is well for me however that I hesitated, and did not, as monsieur de Guerchy pressed me to do, constitute myself prisoner. What a ridiculous vain-glorious figure I should have

¹ Brionne de Lomenie.

² Madame du Deffand had sent Mr. Walpole a snuff-box, in which was a portrait of madame de Sevigné, accompanied by a letter written in

her name from the Elysian-fields, and addressed to Mr. Walpole, who did not at first suspect madame du Deffand as the author, but thought both the present and letter had come from the duchess of Choiseul. E.

made at Versailles, with a laboured letter and my present ! I still shudder when I think of it, and have scolded madame du Deffand black and blue. However, I feel very comfortable ; and though it will be imputed to my own vanity, that I showed the box as madame de Choiseul's present, I resign the glory, and submit to the shame with great satisfaction. I have no pain in receiving this present from madame du Deffand, and must own have great pleasure that nobody but she could write that most charming of all letters'. Did not lord Chesterfield think it so, madam ? I doubt our friend Mr. Hume must allow that not only madame de Boufflers, but Voltaire himself, could not have written so well. When I give up madame de Sevigné herself, I think his sacrifices will be trifling.

Pray, madam, continue your waters ; and, if possible, wash away that original sin, the gout. What would one give for a little rainbow to tell one, one should never have it again ! Well, but then one should have a burning fever—for I think the greatest comfort that good-natured divines give us is, that we are not to be drowned any more, in order that we may be burnt. It will not at least be this summer ; here is nothing but haystacks swimming round me. If it should cease raining by Monday se'nnight, I think of dining with your ladyship at Old Windsor ; and if Mr. Bateman presses me mightily, I may take a bed there.

* The letter accompanying the portrait, and written in the name of madame de Sevigné.— It was as follows :

“ Des Champs Elisées,

Point de succession de tems, point de date.

“ Je connois votre folle passion pour moi, votre enthousiasme pour mes lettres, votre veneration pour les lieux que j'ai habités : j'ai appris le culte que vous m'y avez rendu : j'en suis si penetrée, que j'ai sollicité & obtenu la permission de mes Souverains de vous venir trouver pour ne vous quitter jamais. J'abandonne sans regret ces lieux fortunés ; je vous prefere à tous ses habitans : jouissez du plaisir de me voir ; ne vous plaignez point que ce ne soit qu'en peinture ; c'est la seule existence que puissent avoir les ombres. J'ai été maîtresse de choisir l'age où je voulois reparoitre ; j'ai pris celui de vingt cinq

ans pour m'assurer d'être toujours pour vous un objet agréable. Ne craignez aucun changement ; c'est un singulier avantage des ombres ; quoique legeres, elles sont immuables.

“ J'ai pris la plus petite figure qu'il m'a été possible, pour n'être jamais séparée de vous. Je veux vous accompagner par tout, sur terre, sur mer, à la ville, aux champs ; mais ce que j'exige de vous, c'est de me mener incessamment en France, de me faire revoir ma patrie, la ville de Paris, et d'y choisir pour votre habitation le fauxbourg St. Germain ; c'étoit là qu'habitoient mes meilleures amies, c'est le séjour des vôtres ; vous me ferez faire connoissance avec elles : je ferai bien aise de juger si elles sont dignes de vous, & d'être les rivales de

RABUTIN DE SEVIGNE.”

As I have a waste of paper before me, and nothing more to say, I have a mind to fill it with a translation of a tale that I found lately in the *Dictionnaire d'Anecdotes*, taken from a German author. The novelty of it struck me, and I put it into verse—ill-enough; but, as the old duchess of Rutland used to say of a lie, it will do for news into the country.

From Time's usurping power, I see,
Not Acheron itself is free.
His wasting hand my subjects feel,
Grow old, and wrinkle though in hell.
Decrepit is Alecto grown,
Megæra worn to skin and bone;
And t'other beldam is so old,
She has not spirits left to scold.
Go, Hermes, bid my brother Jove
Send three new furies from above.
To Mercury thus Pluto said:
The winged deity obey'd.

It was about the self-same season,
That Juno, with as little reason,
Rung for her abigail; and you know,
Iris is chamber-maid to Juno.
Iris, d'ye hear? Mind what I say,
I want three maids—inquire—No, stay!
Three virgins—Yes, unspotted all;
No characters equivocal.
Go find me three, whose manners pure
Can envy's sharpest tooth endure.
The goddesses curtsy'd, and retir'd;
From London to Pekin inquir'd;
Search'd huts and palaces—in vain;
And, tir'd, to heaven came back again.
Alone! are you returned alone?
How wicked must the world be grown!

What

What has my profligate been doing ?
 On earth has he been spreading ruin ?
 Come, tell me all——Fair Iris sigh'd,
 And thus disconsolate replied :
 'Tis true, O queen ! three maids I found,
 The like are not on christian ground ;
 So chaste, severe, immaculate,
 The very name of man they hate :
 These—but, alas ! I came too late ;
 For Hermes had been there before ;
 In triumph off to Pluto bore
 Three sisters, whom yourself would own
 The true supports of virtue's throne.
 To Pluto !—Mercy ! cried the queen,
 What can my brother Pluto mean ?
 Poor man ! he dotes, or mad he sure is !
 What can he want them for ?—Three furies.

}

You will say I am an *infernal* poet ; but every body cannot write as they
 do *aux champs Elysées*. Adieu, madam !

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

What has my daughter been doing?

Oh, she has been reading and

and she has been all the time

the same old story

and she has been all the time

the same old story

and she has been all the time

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L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

CAROLINE CAMPBELL,

COUNTESS DOWAGER OF AILESBURY,

From the Year 1760 to the Year 1779.

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FROM

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TO

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COUNTESS DOWAGER OF AILESBUURY,

From the Year 1760 to the Year 1779.

L E T T E R I.

TO CAROLINE CAMPBELL, COUNTESS DOWAGER OF AILESBUURY.

Whichnovre, August 23, 1760.

WELL, madam, if I had known whither I was coming, I would not have come alone! Mr. Conway and your ladyship should have come too. Do you know, this is the individual manor-house,¹ where married ladies may have a fitch of bacon upon the easiest terms in the world? I should have expected that the owners would be ruined in satisfying the conditions of the obligation, and that the park would be stocked with hogs instead of deer.—On the contrary, it is thirty years since the fitch was claimed, and Mr. Offley was never so *near* losing one as when you and Mr. Conway were at Ragley. He so little expects the demand, that the fitch is only hung in effigie over the hall chimney, carved in wood. Are not you ashamed, madam, never to have put in your claim? It is above a year and a day that you have been married, and I never once heard either of you

¹ Of Whichnovre near Litchfield.

mention

mention a journey to Whichnovre. If you quarrelled at loo every night, you could not quit your pretensions with more indifference. I had a great mind to take my oath, as one of your witnesses, that you neither of you would, if you were at liberty, prefer any body else, *ne fairer ne fouler*, and I could easily get twenty persons to swear the same. Therefore, unless you will let the world be convinced, that all your apparent harmony is counterfeit, you must set out immediately for Mr. Offley's, or at least send me a letter of attorney to claim the fitch in your names; and I will send it up by the coach, to be left at the *Blue Boar*, or wherever you will have it delivered. But you had better come in person; you will see one of the prettiest spots in the world; it is a little paradise, and the more like the antique one, as, by all I have said, the married couple seems to be driven out of it. The house is very indifferent: behind is a pretty park; the situation, a brow of a hill, commanding sweet meadows, through which the Trent serpentizes in numberless windings and branches. The spires of the cathedral of Litchfield are in front at a distance, with variety of other steeples, seats, and farms, and the horizon bounded by rich hills covered with blue woods. If you love a prospect, or bacon, you will certainly come hither.

Wentworth-castle, Sunday night.

I HAD writ thus far yesterday, but had no opportunity of sending my letter. I arrived here last night, and found only the duke of Devonshire, who went to Hardwicke this morning: they were down at the menagerie, and there was a clean little pullet, with which I thought his grace looked as if he should be glad to eat a slice of Whichnovre bacon. We follow him to Chatsworth to-morrow, and make our entry to the public dinner, to the disagreeableness of which I fear even lady M———'s company will not reconcile me.

My Gothic building, which my lord Strafford has executed in the menagerie, has a charming effect. There are two bridges built besides; but the new front is very little advanced. Adieu, madam!

Your most affectionate evidence,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Strawberry-hill, June 13th, 1761.

I NEVER ate such good snuff, nor smelt such delightful bonbons, as your ladyship has sent me. Every time you rob the duke's dessert, does it cost you a pretty snuff-box? Do the pastors at the Hague¹ enjoin such expensive retributions? If a man steals a kiss there, I suppose he does penance in a sheet of Brussels lace. The comical part is, that you own the theft, and send it me, but say nothing of the vehicle of your repentance. In short, madam, the box is the prettiest thing I ever saw, and I give you a thousand thanks for it.

When you comfort yourself about the operas, you don't know what you have lost; nay, nor I neither; for I was here, concluding that a serenata for a birth-day would be as dull and as vulgar as those festivities generally are: but I hear of nothing but the enchantment of it. There was a second orchestra in the footman's gallery, disguised by clouds, and filled with the music of the king's chapel. The choristers behaved like angels, and the harmony between the two bands was in the most exact time. Elisi piqued himself, and beat both heaven and earth. The joys of the year do not end there. The under-actors open at Drury-lane to-night with a new comedy by Murphy, called *All in the Wrong*. At Ranelagh all is fireworks and sky-rockets. The birth-day exceeded the splendour of Haroun Alraschid, and the Arabian Nights, when people had nothing to do but to scour a lantern, and send a genie for a hamper of diamonds and rubies. Do you remember one of those stories, where a prince has eight statues of diamonds, which he overlooks, because he fancies he wants a ninth; and to his great surprise the ninth proves to be pure flesh and blood, which he never thought of? Some how or other, lady—— is the ninth statue; and, you will allow, has better white and red than if she was made of pearls and rubies. Oh! I forgot, I was telling you of the birth-day: my lord P—— had drunk the king's health so often at dinner, that at the ball he took Mrs. —— for a beautiful woman, and, as she says, *made an improper use of his hands*. The proper use of hers, she thought, was to give him a box on the ear, though within the verge of the court. He returned it by a push, and she tumbled off the end

¹ Lady Ailesbury remained at the Hague while Mr. Conway was with the army during the campaign of 1761. E.

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of the bench ; which his majesty has accepted as sufficient punishment, and she is not to lose her right hand¹.

I enclose the list your ladyship desired : you will see that the *plurality of Worlds* are Moore's, and of some I do not know the authors. There is a late edition with these names to them.

My duchess was to set out this morning. I saw her for the last time the day before yesterday at lady Kildare's : never was a journey less a party of pleasure. She was so melancholy, that all mifs ——'s oddness and my spirits could scarce make her smile. Towards the end of the night, and that was three in the morning, I did divert her a little. I slipped Pam into her lap, and then taxed her with having it there. She was quite confounded ; but, taking it up, saw he had a telescope in his hand, which I had drawn, and that the card, which was split, and just waxed together, contained these lines :

Ye simple astronomers, lay by your glasses ;
The transit of Venus has proved you all asses :
Your telescopes signify nothing to scan it ;
'Tis not meant in the clouds, 'tis not meant of a planet :
The seer who foretold it mistook or deceives us,
For Venus's transit is when Grafton leaves us.

I don't send your ladyship these verses as good, but to show you that all gallantry does not centre at the Hague.

I wish I could tell you that Stanley and Buffy, by crossing over and figuring in, had forwarded the peace. It is no more made than Belleisle is taken. However, I flatter myself that you will not stay abroad till you return for the coronation, which is ordered for the beginning of October. I don't care to tell you how lovely the season is ; how my acacias are powdered with flowers, and my hay just in its picturesque moment. Do they ever make any other hay in Holland than bullrushes in ditches ? My new buildings rise so swiftly, that I shall not have a shilling left, so far from giving commissions on Amsterdam. When I have made my house so big that I

¹ The old punishment for giving a blow in the king's presence. E.

don't

don't know what to do with it, and am entirely undone, I propose, like king Pyrrhus, who took such a roundabout way to a bowl of punch, to sit down and enjoy myself; but with this difference, that it is better to ruin one's self than all the world. I am sure you would think as I do, though Pyrrhus were king of Prussia. I long to have you bring back the only hero that ever I could endure. Adieu, madam! I sent you just such another piece of tittle-tattle as this by general Waldegrave: you are very partial to me, or very fond of knowing every thing that passes in your own country, if you can be amused so. If you can, 'tis surely my duty to divert you, though at the expence of my character; for I own I am ashamed when I look back and see four sides of paper scribbled over with nothings.

Your ladyship's most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER III.

Strawberry-hill, July 20th, 1761.

I BLUSH, dear madam, on observing that half my letters to your ladyship are prefaced with thanks for presents:—don't mistake; I am not ashamed of thanking you, but of having so many occasions for it. Monsieur Hop has sent me the piece of china: I admire it as much as possible, and intend to like him as much as ever I can; but hitherto I have not seen him, not having been in town since he arrived.

Could I have believed that the Hague would so easily compensate for England? nay, for Park-place! Adieu, all our agreeable suppers! Instead of lady Cecilia's¹ French songs, we shall have madame Welderen quavering a confusion of d's and t's, b's and p's—*Bourquoi sçais du blaire*?—Worse than that, I expect to meet all my — relations at your house, and sir Samson Gideon instead of Charles Townshend. You will laugh like Mrs. Tipkin² when a Dutch Jew tells you that he bought at two and a half per cent. and sold at four. Come back, if you have any taste left: you had better be

¹ Lady Cecilia West, daughter of John earl of Delawar, afterwards married to general James Johnston.

² The first words of a favourite French air.

³ A character in the Tender Husband, or the Accomplished Fools.

here talking robes, ermine and tiffue, jewels and tresses, as all the world does, than own you are so corrupted. Did you receive my notification of the new queen? Her mother is dead, and she will not be here before the end of August.

My mind is much more at peace about Mr. Conway than it was. Nobody thinks there will be a battle, as the French did not attack them when both armies shifted camps; and since that, Soubise has entrenched himself up to the whiskers:—whiskers I think he has, I have been so afraid of him! Yet our hopes of meeting are still very distant: the peace does not advance; and if Europe has a *stiver* left in its pockets, the war will continue; though happily all parties have been so scratched, that they only sit and look anger at one another, like a dog and cat that don't care to begin again.

We are in danger of losing our sociable box at the opera. The new queen is very musical, and, if Mr. deputy Hodges and the city don't exert their veto, will probably go to the Haymarket. * * * * * G——P——, in imitation of the Adonises in Tanzai's retinue, has asked to be her majesty's grand harper. *Dieu sçait quelle racherie il y aura!* All the guitars are untuned; and if miss Conway has a mind to be in fashion at her return, she must take some David or other to teach her the new twing twang, twing twang. As I am still desirous of being in fashion with your ladyship, and am, over and above, very grateful, I keep no company but my lady Denbigh and lady Blandford, and learn every evening, for two hours, to mash my English. Already I am tolerably fluent in saying *she for he* ².

Good night, madam! I have no news to send you: one cannot announce a royal wedding and a coronation every post.

Your most faithful and obliged servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. Pray, madam, do the gnats bite your legs? Mine are swelled as big as *one*, which is saying a great deal for me.

¹ The honourable Anne Damer.

² A mistake which these ladies, who were both Dutch women, constantly made. E

July 22.

I HAD writ this, and was not time enough for the mail, when I receive your charming note, and this magnificent victory! Oh! my dear madam, how I thank you, how I congratulate you, how I feel for you, how I have felt for you and for myself!—But I bought it by two terrible hours to-day—I heard of the battle two hours before I could learn a word of Mr. Conway—I sent all round the world, and went half round it myself. I have cried and laughed, trembled and danced, as you bid me. If you had sent me as much old china as king Augustus gave two regiments for, I should not be half so much obliged to you as for your note. How could you think of me, when you had so much reason to think of nothing but yourself?—And then they say virtue is not rewarded in this world. I will preach at Paul's Cross, and quote you and Mr. Conway; no two persons were ever so good and so happy. In short, I am serious in the height of all my joy. God is very good to you, my dear madam; I thank him for you; I thank him for myself: it is very unallayed pleasure we taste at this moment!—Good night! My heart is so expanded, I could write to the last scrap of my paper; but I won't.

Yours most entirely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER IV.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 27, 1761.

YOU are a mean mercenary woman. If you did not want histories of weddings and coronations, and had not jobs to be executed about muslins and a bit of china and counterband goods, one should never hear of you. When you don't want a body, you can frisk about with Greffiers and Burgomasters, and be as merry in a dyke as my lady Frog herself. The moment your curiosity is agog, or your cambric seized, you recollect a good cousin in England, and, as folks said two hundred years ago, begin to write *upon the knees of your heart*. Well! I am a sweet-tempered creature, I forgive you. I have already writ to a little friend in the custom-house, and will try what can be done; though, by Mr. Amyand's report to the duchess of Richmond, I fear

² Of Kirckdenckirck.

your case is desperate.—For the genealogies, I have turned over all my books to no purpose; I can meet with no lady Howard that married a Carey, nor a lady Seymour that married a Caufield. Lettice Caufield, who married Francis Staunton, was daughter of Dr. James (not George) Caufield, younger brother of the first lord Charlemont. This is all I can ascertain. For the other pedigree; I can inform your friend that there was a sir Nicholas Throckmorton, who married an Anne Carew, daughter of sir Nicholas Carew, knight of the garter, not Carey—But this sir Nicholas Carew married Joan Courtney—not a Howard: and besides, the Careys and Throckmortons you wot of were just the reverse: your Carey was the cock, and Throckmorton the hen—mine are vice versa:—otherwise, let me tell your friend, Carews and Courtneys are worth Howards any day of the week, and of ancients blood:—so, if descent is all he wants, I advise him to take up with the pedigree as I have refuted it. However, I will cast a figure once more, and try if I can conjure up the dames Howard and Seymour that he wants.

My heraldry was much more offended at the coronation with the ladies that did walk, than with those that walked out of their place; yet I was not so *perilously* angry as my lady Cowper, who refused to set a foot with my lady M——; and when she was at last obliged to associate with her, set out on a round trot, as if she designed to prove the antiquity of her family by marching as lustily as a maid of honour of queen Gwiniver. It was in truth a brave sight. The sea of heads in Palace-yard, the guards horse and foot, the scaffolds, balconies and procession, exceeded imagination. The hall, when once illuminated, was noble; but they suffered the whole parade to return into it in the dark, that his majesty might be surprised with the quickness with which the sconces caught fire. The Champion acted well; the other Paladins had neither the grace nor alertness of Rinaldo. Lord Effingham and the duke of Bedford were but untoward knights errant; and lord Talbot had not much more dignity than the figure of general Monke in the abbey. The habit of the peers is unbecoming to the last degree; but the peeresses made amends for all defects. Your daughter Richmond, lady Kildare, and lady Pembroke were as handsome as the Graces. Lady Rochford, lady Holderness, and lady Lyttelton looked exceedingly well in that their day; and for those of the day before, the duchess of Queensberry, lady Westmorland, and lady Albemarle were surprising. Lady Harrington was noble at a distance, and so covered with diamonds, that you would have thought she had bid

somebody or other, like Falstaff, *rob me the exchequer*. Lady Northampton was very magnificent too, and looked prettier than I have seen her of late. Lady Spencer and lady Bolingbroke were not the worst figures there. The duchess of Ancafter marched alone after the queen with much majesty; and there were two new Scotch peeresses that pleased every body, lady Sutherland and lady Dunmore. Per contra, were lady P——, who had put a wig on, and old E——, who had scratched hers off; lady S——, the dowager E——, and a lady S—— with her tresses coal black, and her hair coal white. Well! it was all delightful, but not half so charming as its being over—The gabble one heard about it for six weeks before, and the fatigue of the day, could not well be compensated by a mere puppet-show; for puppet-show it was, though it cost a million. The queen is so gay that we shall not want fights; she has been at the Opera, the Beggar's Opera and the Rehearsal, and two nights ago carried the king to Ranelagh. In short, I am so miserable with losing my duchess¹, and you and Mr. Conway, that I believe, if you should be another six weeks without writing to me, I should come to the Hague and scold you in person—for, alas! my dear lady, I have no hopes of seeing you here. Stanley is recalled, is expected every hour—Buffy goes to-morrow; and Mr. Pitt is so impatient to conquer Mexico, that I don't believe he will stay till my lord Bristol can be ordered to leave Madrid. I tremble lest Mr. Conway should not get leave to come—nay, are we sure he would like to ask it? He was so impatient to get to the army, that I should not be surpris'd if he staid there till every sutler and woman that follows the camp was come away. You ask me if we are not in admiration of prince Ferdinand—In truth, we have thought very little of him. He may outwit Broglio ten times, and not be half so much talked of, as lord Talbot's backing his horse down Westminster-hall. The generality are not struck with any thing under a complete victory. If you have a mind to be well with the mob of England, you must be knocked on the head like Wolfe, or bring home as many diamonds as Clive. We live in a country where so many follies or novelties start forth every day, that we have not time to try a general's capacity by the rules of Polybius.

I have hardly left room for my obligations—to your ladyship, for my com-

¹ The duchess of Grafton, who was abroad.

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missions at Amsterdam; to Mrs. Sally¹, for her tea-pots, which are likely to stay so long at the Hague, that I fear they will have begot a whole set of china; and to miss Conway and lady George, for thinking of me. Pray assure them of my *re-thinking*. Adieu, dear madam! Don't you think we had better write oftener and shorter?

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER V.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 10, 1761.

I DON'T know what business I had, madam, to be an œconomist: it was out of character. I wished for a thousand more drawings in that sale at Amsterdam, but concluded they would be very dear; and not having seen them, I thought it too rash to trouble your ladyship with a large commission.

I wish I could give you as good an account of your commission; but it is absolutely impracticable. I employed one of the most sensible and experienced men in the custom-house; and all the result was, he could only recommend me to Mr. Amyand as the newest and consequently the most polite of the commissioners—but the duchess of Richmond had tried him before—to no purpose. There is no way of recovering any of your goods, but purchasing them again at the sale.

What am I doing, to be talking to you of drawings and chintzes, when the world is all turned topsy turvy? Peace, as the poets would say, is not only returned to heaven, but has carried her sister Virtue along with her—Oh! no, Peace will keep no such company—Virtue is an errant strumpet, and loves diamonds as well as my lady——, and is as fond of a coronet as my lord Melcombe. Worse! worse! She will set men to cutting throats, and pick their pockets at the same time. I am in such a passion, I cannot tell you what I am angry about—Why, about Virtue and Mr. Pitt; two errant cheats, gipsies! I believe he was a comrade of Elizabeth Canning, when he lived at Enfield-wash. In short, the council were for making peace;

¹ Lady Ailesbury's woman.

But

But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
 Evades them with a bombast circumstance,
 Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war,
 And in conclusion—nonsums my mediators.

He insisted on a war with Spain, was resisted, and last Monday resigned. The city breathed vengeance on his opposers, the council quaked, and the Lord knows what would have happened; but yesterday, which was only Friday, as this giant was stalking to seize the Tower of London, he stumbled over a silver penny, picked it up, carried it home to lady Esther, and they are now as quiet, good sort of people, as my lord and lady Bath who lived in the vinegar-bottle. In fact, madam, this immaculate man has accepted the barony of Chatham for his wife, with a pension of three thousand pounds a year for three lives; and though he has not quitted the house of commons, I think my lord A—— would now be as formidable there. The pension he has left *us*, is a war for three thousand lives! perhaps, for twenty times three thousand lives!—But—

Does this become a soldier? *this* become
 Whom armies follow'd, and a people lov'd?

What! to sneak out of the scrape, prevent peace, and avoid the war! blast one's character, and all for the comfort of a paltry annuity, a long-necked peeress, and a couple of Grenvilles! The city looks mighty foolish, I believe, and possibly even Beckford may blush. Lord Temple resigned yesterday; I suppose his virtue pants for a dukedom. Lord Egremont has the seals; lord Hardwicke, I fancy, the privy seal; and George Grenville, no longer speaker, is to be the cabinet minister in the house of commons. Oh! madam, I am glad you are inconstant to Mr. Conway, though it is only with a Barbette! If you piqued yourself on your virtue, I should expect you would sell it to the master of a Trechscot.

I told you a lie about the king's going to Ranelagh—No matter; there is no such thing as truth. Garrick exhibits the coronation, and, opening the end of the stage, discovers a real bonfire and real mob: the houses in Drury-lane let their windows at three-pence a head. Rich is going to produce a finer coronation, nay, than the real one; for there is to be a dinner for the

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knights of the bath and the barons of the cinque ports, which lord Talbot refused them.

I put your Caufields and Stauntons into the hands of one of the first heralds upon earth, and who has the entire pedigree of the Careys; but he cannot find a drop of Howard or Seymour blood in the least artery about them. Good night, madam!

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VI.

DEAR MADAM,

Arlington-street, Nov. 28, 1761.

YOU are so bad and so good, that I don't know how to treat you. You give me every mark of kindness but letting me hear from you. You send me charming drawings the moment I trouble you with a commission, and you give lady Cecilia¹ commissions for trifles of my writing, in the most obliging manner. I have taken the latter off her hands. The Fugitive Pieces, and the Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors shall be conveyed to you directly. Lady Cecilia and I agree how we lament the charming suppers there, every time we pass the corner of Warwick-street! We have a little comfort for your sake and our own, in believing that the campaign is at an end, at least for this year—but they tell us, it is to recommence here or in Ireland. You have nothing to do with that. Our politics, I think, will soon be as warm as our war. Charles Townshend is to be lieutenant-general to Mr. Pitt. The duke of Bedford is privy-seal; lord Thomond, cofferer; lord George Cavendish, comptroller.

Diversions, you know, madam, are never at highwater-mark before Christmas: yet operas flourish pretty well: those on Tuesdays are removed to Mondays, because the queen likes the burlettas, and the king cannot go on Tuesdays, his post-days. On those nights we have the middle front box, railed in, where lady Mary² and I sit in triste state like a lord mayor and lady mayoress. The night before last there was a private ball at court, which

¹ Lady Cecilia Johnston.

² Lady Mary Coke.

began

began at half an hour after six, lasted till one, and finished without a supper. The king danced the whole time with the queen, lady Augusta with her four younger brothers. The other performers were: the two duchesses of Ancafter and Hamilton, who danced little; lady Effingham and lady Egremont, who danced much; the six maids of honour; lady Susan Stewart, as attending lady Augusta; and lady Caroline Ruffel, and lady Jane Stewart, the only women not of the family. Lady Northumberland is at Bath; lady Weymouth lies in; lady Bolingbroke was there in waiting, but in black gloves, so did not dance. The men, besides the royals, were lords March and Eglintoun, of the bed-chamber; lord Cantelupe, vice-chamberlain; lord Huntingdon; and four strangers, lord Mandeville, lord Northampton, lord Suffolk, and lord Grey. No fitters-by, but the princess, the duchess of Bedford, and lady Bute.

If it had not been for this ball, I don't know how I should have furnished a decent letter. Pamphlets on Mr. Pitt are the whole conversation, and none of them worth sending cross the water: at least I, who am said to write some of them, think so; by which you may perceive I am not much flattered with the imputation. There must be new personages at least, before I write on any side—Mr. Pitt and the duke of Newcastle! I should as soon think of informing the world that miss Chudleigh is no vestal. You will like better to see some words which Mr. Gray has writ, at miss Speed's request, to an old air of Geminiani: the thought is from the French.

I.

Thyrsis, when we parted, swore
Ere the spring he would return.
Ah! what means yon violet flow'r,
And the buds that deck the thorn?
'Twas the lark that upward sprung,
'Twas the nightingale that sung.

II.

Idle notes! untimely green!
Why this unavailing haste?
Western gales and skies serene
Speak not always winter past:
Cease my doubts, my fears to move;
Spare the honour of my love.

Adieu, madam!

Your most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VII.

MADAM,

Strawberry-hill, March 5, 1762.

ONE of your slaves, a fine young officer, brought me two days ago a very pretty medal from your ladyship. Amidst all your triumphs you do not, I see, forget your English friends, and it makes me extremely happy. He pleased me still more, by assuring me that you return to England when the campaign opens. I can pay this news by none so good as by telling you that we talk of nothing but peace. We are equally ready to give law to the world, or peace. Martinico has not made us intractable. We and the new Czar are the best sort of people upon earth : I am sure, madam, you must adore him ; he is willing to resign all his conquests, that you and Mr. Conway may be settled again at Park-place. My lord Chesterfield, with the despondence of an old man and the wit of a young one, thinks the French and Spaniards must make some attempt upon these islands, and is frightened lest we should not be so well prepared to repel invasions as to make them : he says, "*What will it avail us if we gain the whole world, and lose our own soul?*"

I am here alone, madam, and know nothing to tell you. I came from town on Saturday for the worst cold I ever had in my life, and, what I care less to own even to myself, a cough. I hope lord Chesterfield will not speak more truth in what I have quoted, than in his assertion, that one need not cough if one did not please. It has pulled me extremely, and you may believe I do not look very plump, when I am more emaciated than usual. However, I have taken James's powder for four nights, and have found great benefit from it ; and if miss Conway does not come back with *soixante et douze quartiers*, and the hauteur of a Landgravine, I think I shall still be able to run down the precipices at Park-place with her—This is to be understood, supposing that we have any summer. Yesterday was the first moment that did not feel like Thule : not a glimpse of spring or green, except a miserable almond-tree, half opening one bud, like my lord P——'s eye.

It will be warmer, I hope, by the king's birth-day, or the old ladies will catch their deaths. There is a court dress to be instituted—(to thin the drawing-rooms)—stiff-bodied gowns and bare shoulders. What dreadful discoveries will be made both on fat and lean ! I recommend to you the idea of Mrs. C——, when half-stark ; and I might fill the rest of my paper with such images, but your imagination will supply them ; and you shall excuse me, though

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBURY. 563

though I leave this a short letter: but I wrote merely to thank your ladyship for the medal, and, as you perceive, have very little to say, besides that known and lasting truth, how much I am Mr. Conway's and

Your ladyship's faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VIII.

MADAM,

Strawberry-hill, July 31, 1762.

MAGNANIMOUS as the fair soul of your ladyship is, and plaited with superabundance of Spartan fortitude, I felicitate my own good fortune who can circle this epistle with branches of the gentle olive, as well as crown it with victorious laurel. This pompous paragraph, madam, which in compliment to my lady Lyttelton I have penned in the style of her lord, means no more, than that I wish you joy of the castle of Waldeck*, and more joy on the peace, which I find every body thinks is concluded. In truth, I have still my doubts; and yesterday came news, which, if my lord Bute does not make haste, may throw a little rub in the way. In short, the Czar is dethroned. Some give the honour to his wife; others, who add the little circumstance of his being murdered too, ascribe the revolution to the archbishop of Novgorod, who, like other priests, thinks assassination a less affront to heaven than three Lutheran churches. I hope the latter is the truth; because, in the honeymoonhood of lady C——'s tenderness, I don't know but she might miscarry at the thought of a wife preferring a crown, and scandal says a regiment of grenadiers, to her husband.

I have a little meaning in naming lady Lyttelton and lady C——, who I think are at Park-place. Was not there a promise that you all three would meet Mr. Churchill and lady Mary here in the beginning of August? Yes, indeed was there, and I put in my claim.—Not confining your heroic and musical ladyships to a day or a week; my time is at your command: and I wish the rain was at mine; for, if you or it do not come soon, I shall not have a leaf left. Strawberry is browner than lady B—— F——.

* At the taking of which Mr. Conway had assisted. E.

564 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

I was grieved, madam, to miss seeing you in town on Monday, particularly as I wished to settle this party. If you will let me know when it will be your pleasure, I will write to my sister.

I am your ladyship's

Most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER IX.

Arlington-street, Dec. 29, 1772.

INDEED, madam, I want you and Mr. Conway in town. Christmas has dispersed all my company, and left nothing but a loo-party or two. If all the fine days were not gone out of town too, I should take the air in a morning; but I am not yet nimble enough, like old Mrs. Nugent, to jump out of a post-chaise into an assembly.

You have a woful taste, my lady, not to like lord G——'s bon mot. I am almost too indignant to tell you of a most amusing book in six volumes, called *Histoire philosophique et politique du commerce des deux Indes*. It tells one every thing in the world—how to make conquests, invasions, blunders, settlements, bankruptcies, fortunes, &c. tells you the natural and historical history of all nations; talks commerce, navigation, tea, coffee, china, mines, salt, spices; of the Portuguese, English, French, Dutch, Danes, Spaniards, Arabs, Caravans, Persians, Indians, of Louis XIV, and the king of Prussia; of la Bourdonnois, Dupleix and admiral Saunders; of rice, and women that dance naked; of camels, gingams and muslin; of millions of millions of livres, pounds, rupees, and gouries; of iron, cables, and Circassian women; of law and the Mississippi; and against all governments and religions. This and every thing else is in the two first volumes. I cannot conceive what is left for the four others. And all is so mixed, that you learn forty new trades, and fifty new histories, in a single chapter. There is spirit, wit, and clearness—and if there were but less avoirdupois weight in it, it would be the richest book in the world in materials—but figures to me are so many cyphers, and only put me in mind of children that say, an hundred hundred hundred millions. However,

ever, it has made me learned enough to talk about Mr. Sykes and the secret committee¹, which is all that any body talks of at present; and yet mademoiselle Heinel is arrived. This is all I know, and a great deal too, considering I know nothing—and yet, were there either truth or lies, I should know them, for one hears every thing in a sick room. Good night both!

LETTER X.

Strawberry-hill, Nov. 7, 1774.

I HAVE written such tomes to Mr. Conway², madam, and have so nothing new to write, that I might as well methinks begin and end like the lady to her husband: *Je vous écris parceque je n'ai rien à faire: je finis parceque je n'ai rien à vous dire.* Yes, I have two complaints to make, one of your ladyship, the other of myself. You tell me nothing of lady Harriet³: Have you no tongue, or the French no eyes? or are her eyes employed in nothing but seeing? What a vulgar employment for a fine woman's eyes after she is risen from her toilet! I declare I will ask no more questions—What is it to me, whether she is admired or not? I should know how charming she is, though all Europe were blind. I hope I am not to be told by any barbarous nation upon earth what beauty and grace are!

For myself, I am guilty of the gout in my elbow; the left—witness my handwriting. Whether I caught cold by the deluge in the night, or whether the bootikins like the water of Styx can only preserve the parts they surround, I doubt they have saved me but three weeks, for so long my reckoning has been out. However, as I feel nothing in my feet, I flatter myself that this Pindaric transition will not be a regular ode, but a fragment, the more valuable for being imperfect.

Now for my gazette.—Marriages—Nothing done. Intrigues—More in the political than civil way. Births—Under par since lady B—— left off breeding. Gaming—Low water. Deaths—Lord Morton, lord Wentworth,

¹ Upon East Indian affairs.

³ Lady Harriet Stanhope, afterwards married

² Mr. Conway and lady Ailesbury were now to lord Foley.
at Paris together.

duchess

duchess Douglas. Election stock—More buyers than sellers. Promotions—Mr. Wilkes as high as he can go—A-propos, he was told lord chancellor intended to signify to him that the king did not approve the city's choice: he replied, Then I shall signify to his lordship, that I am at least as fit to be lord mayor as he to be lord chancellor. This being more gospel than every thing Mr. Wilkes says, the formal approbation was given.

Mr. Burke has succeeded at Bristol, and sir James Peachey will miscarry in Suffex. But what care you, madam, about our parliament? You will see the *reentrée* of the old one, with songs and epigrams into the bargain. We do not shift our parliaments with so much gaiety. Money in one hand, and abuse in t'other—those are all the arts we know. *Wit and a gamut* I don't believe ever signified a parliament¹, whatever the glossaries may say; for they never produce pleasantry and harmony. Perhaps you may not taste this Saxon pun, but I know it will make the Antiquarian Society die with laughing.

Expectation hangs on America. The result of the general assembly is expected in four or five days. If one may believe the papers, which one should not believe, the other-side-of-the-waterists are not *doux comme des moutons*, and yet we do intend to eat them. I was in town on Monday; the duchess of B—— graced our loo, and made it as rantipole as a quaker's meeting. *Louis Quinze*², I believe, is arrived by this time, but I fear without *quinze louis*.

Your herb-snuff and the four glasses are lying in my warehouse, but I can hear of no ship going to Paris. You are now at Fontainebleau; but not thinking of Francis I. the queen of Sweden and Monaldeschi. It is terrible that one cannot go to courts that are gone! You have supped with the chevalier de Boufflers: Did he act every thing in the word, and sing every thing in the world, and laugh at every thing in the world? Has madame de Cambis sung to you *Sans depot, sans legereté*³? Has lord Cholmondeley delivered my paquet? I hear I have hopes of madame d'Olonne. Gout or no gout, I think I shall be little in town till after Christmas. My elbow makes me bless

¹ *Wetenagemot* was the name of the Saxon great council, the supposed origin of parliaments. E. was very fond of loo, and who had lost much money at that game. E.

² This was a cant name given to a lady who ³ The first words of a favourite French air.
myself

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBURY. 567

myself that I am not at Paris. Old age is no such uncomfortable thing, if one gives one's self up to it with a good grace, and don't drag it about

To midnight dances and the public show.

If one stays quietly in one's own house in the country, and cares for nothing but one's self, scolds one's servants, condemns every thing that is new, and recollects how charming a thousand things were formerly that were very disagreeable, one gets over the winters very well, and the summers get over themselves.

LETTER XI.

From t'other side of the water, August 17th, 1775.

INTERPRETING your ladyship's orders in the most personal sense, as respecting the dangers of the sea, I write the instant I am landed. I did not, in truth, set out till yesterday morning at eight o'clock; but finding the roads, horses, postillions, tides, winds, moons, and captain Fectors in the pleasantest humour in the world, I embarked almost as soon as I arrived at Dover, and reached Calais before the sun was awake;—and here I am for the sixth time in my life, with only the trifling distance of seven-and-thirty years between my first voyage and the present. Well, I can only say in excuse, that I am got into the land of Strulbrugs, where one is never too old to be young, and where *la bequille du pere Barnabas* blossoms like Aaron's rod, or the Glastonbury thorn.

Now to be sure I shall be a little mortified, if your ladyship wanted a letter of news, and did not at all trouble your head about my navigation. However, you will not tell one so; and therefore I will persist in believing that this good news will be received with transport at Park-place, and that the bells of Henley will be set a-ringing. The rest of my adventures must be deferred till they have happened, which is not always the case of travels. I send you no compliments from Paris, because I have not got thither, nor delivered the bundle which Mr. Conway sent me. I did, as your ladyship commanded,
buy

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buy three pretty little medallions in frames of filigraine, for our dear old friend¹. They will not ruin you, having cost not a guinea and half; but it was all I could find that was genteel and portable; and as she does not measure by guineas, but attentions, she will be as much pleased as if you had sent her a dozen acres of Park-place. As they are in bas-relief, too, they are feelable, and that is a material circumstance to her. Indeed I wish the Diomedé had even so much as a pair of Nankin!

Adieu, toute la chère famille! I think of October with much satisfaction; it will double the pleasure of my return.

 LETTER XII.

Paris, August 20, 1775.

I HAVE been sea-sick to death; I have been poisoned by dirt and vermin; I have been stifled by heat, choked by dust, and starved for want of any thing I could touch: and yet, madam, here I am perfectly well, not in the least fatigued; and, thanks to the rivelled parchments, formerly faces, which I have seen by hundreds, I find myself almost as young as when I came hither first in the last century. In spite of my whims, and delicacy, and laziness, none of my grievances have been mortal: I have borne them as well as if I set up for a philosopher, like the sages of this town. Indeed I have found my dear old woman so well, and looking so much better than she did four years ago, that I am transported with pleasure, and thank your ladyship and Mr. Conway for driving me hither. Madame du Deffand came to me the instant I arrived, and sat by me whilst I stripped and dressed myself; for, as she said, since she cannot see, there was no harm in my being stark. She was charmed with your present, but was so kind as to be so much more charmed with my arrival, that she did not think of it a moment. I sat with her till half an hour after two in the morning, and had a letter from her before my eyes were open again. In short, her soul is immortal, and forces her body to bear it company.

¹ Madame du Deffand.

This

This is the very eve of madame Clotilde's wedding; but monsieur Turgot, to the great grief of lady M——, will suffer no cost, but one banquet, one ball, and a play at Versailles. Count Virri gives a banquet, a *bal masqué*, and a firework. I think I shall see little but the last, from which I will send your ladyship a rocket in my next letter. Lady M——, I believe, has had a private audience 'of the embassador's leg', but *en tout bien & honneur*, and only to satisfy her ceremonious curiosity about any part of royal nudity. I am just going to her, as she is to Versailles; and I have not time to add a word more to the vows of your ladyship's

Most faithful

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XIII.

Arlington-street, Dec. 12, 1775.

DID you hear that scream?—Don't be frightened, madam; it was only the duchess of Kingston last Sunday was sevensnight at chapel: but it is better to be prepared; for she has sent word to the house of lords, that her nerves are so bad she intends to scream for these two months, and therefore they must put off her trial. They are to take her throes into consideration to-day; and, that there may be sufficient room for the length of her veil and train, and attendants, have a mind to treat her with Westminster-hall. I hope so, for I should like to see this comedie larmoyante; and besides, I conclude, it would bring your ladyship to town. You shall have timely notice.

There is another comedy infinitely worth seeing, monsieur le Teflier. He is Preville, and Caillaud, and Garrick, and Weston, and Mrs. Clive, all together; and as perfect in the most insignificant part as in the most difficult. To be sure, it is hard to give up loo in such fine weather, when one can play from morning till night. In London, Pam can scarce get a house till ten o'clock. If you happen to see the general your husband, make my compliments to him, madam: his friend the king of Prussia is going to the devil and Alexander the Great.

¹ He alludes to the ceremony of the marriages of princesses by proxy. E.

LETTER XIV.

Strawberry-hill, June 25, 1778.

I AM quite astonished, madam, at not hearing of Mr. Conway's being returned! What is he doing? Is he revolting and setting up for himself, like our nabobs in India? or is he forming Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark, into the united provinces in the compass of a silver penny? I should not wonder if this was to be the fate of our distracted empire, which we seem to have made so large, only that it might afford to split into separate kingdoms. I told Mr. C. I should not write any more, concluding he would not stay a twinkling; and your ladyship's last encouraged my expecting him. In truth, I had nothing to tell him if I had written.

I have been in town but one single night this age, as I could not bear to throw away this phoenix June. It has rained a good deal this morning, but only made it more delightful. The flowers are all Arabian. I have found but one inconvenience, which is the hosts of cuckoos: one would not think one was in Doctors Commons. It is very disagreeable, that the nightingales should sing but half a dozen songs, and the other beasts squall for two months together.

Poor Mrs. Clive has been robbed again in her own lane, as she was last year, and has got the jaundice, she thinks, with the fright. I don't make a visit without a blunderbuss; so one might as well be invaded by the French. Though I live in the centre of ministers, I do not know a syllable of politics; and though within hearing of lady —, who is but two miles off, I have not a word of news to send your ladyship. I live like Berecynthia, surrounded by nephews and nieces: big and little, I have fifteen near me: yet Park-place is full as much in my mind, and I beg for its history.

Your most faithful

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

Saturday night, July 10, 1779.

I COULD not thank your ladyship before the post went out to-day, as I was getting into my chaise to go and dine at Carshalton with my cousin T. Walpole when I received your kind enquiry about my eye. It is quite well again, and I hope the next attack of the gout will be any where rather than in that quarter.

I did not expect Mr. Conway would think of returning just now. As you have lost both Mrs. D—— and lady William Campbell, I do not see why your ladyship should not go to Goodwood.

The Baroness's increasing peevishness does not surprise me. When people will not weed their own minds, they are apt to be overrun with nettles. She knows nothing of politics, and no wonder talks nonsense about them. It is silly to wish three nations had but one neck; but it is ten times more absurd to act as if it was so, which the government has done;—aye, and forgetting, too, that it has not a scymitar large enough to sever that neck, which they have in effect made *one*. It is past the time, madam, of making conjectures. How can one guess whither France and Spain will direct a blow that is in their option? I am rather inclined to think that they will have patience to ruin us in detail. Hitherto France and America have carried their points by that manoeuvre. Should there be an engagement at sea, and the French and Spanish fleets, by their great superiority, should have the advantage, one knows not what might happen. Yet, though there are such large preparations making on the French coast, I do not much expect a serious invasion, as they are sure they can do us more damage by a variety of other attacks, where we can make little resistance. Gibraltar and Jamaica can but be the immediate objects of Spain. Ireland is much worse guarded than this island:—nay, we must be undone by our expence, should the summer pass without any attempt. My cousin thinks they will try to destroy Portsmouth and Plymouth—but I have seen nothing in the present French ministry that looks like bold enterprise. We are much more adventurous, that set every thing to the hazard: but there are such numbers of *baronesses* that both talk and act with passion, that one would think the nation had lost its senses. Every thing has miscarried that has been undertaken, and the worse we succeed,

the more is risked ;—yet the nation is not angry ! How can one conjecture during such a delirium ? I sometimes almost think I must be in the wrong to be of so contrary an opinion to most men :—yet, when every misfortune that has happened had been foretold by a few, why should I not think I have been in the right ? Has not almost every single event that has been announced as prosperous proved a gross falsehood, and often a silly one ? Are we not at this moment assured that Washington cannot possibly amass an army of above 8000 men ! and yet Clinton, with 20,000 men, and with the hearts, as we are told, too, of three parts of the colonies, dares not show his teeth without the walls of New York !—Can I be in the wrong in not believing what is so contradictory to my senses ? We could not conquer America when it stood alone ; then France supported it, and we did not mend the matter. To make it still easier, we have driven Spain into the alliance. Is this wisdom ? Would it be presumption, even if one were single, to think that we must have the worst in such a contest ? Shall I be like the mob, and expect to conquer France and Spain, and then thunder upon America ?—Nay, but the higher mob do not expect such success. They would not be so angry at the house of Bourbon, if not morally certain that those kings destroy all our passionate desire and expectation of conquering America. We bullied, and threatened, and begged, and nothing would do. Yet independence was still the word. Now we rail at the two monarchs—and when they have banged us, we shall sue to them as humbly as we did to the Congress. All this my senses, such as they are, tell me has been and will be the case. What is worse, all Europe is of the same opinion ; and though forty thousand *baronesses* may be ever so angry, I venture to prophesy that we shall make but a very foolish figure whenever we are so lucky as to obtain a peace ; and posterity, that may have prejudices of its own, will still take the liberty to pronounce that its ancestors were a woful set of politicians from the year 1774 to — I wish I knew when.

If I might advise, I would recommend Mr. B—— to command the fleet in the room of sir Charles Hardy. The fortune of the B——s is powerful enough to baffle calculation. Good night, madam !

P. S. I have not written to Mr. Conway since this day sevensnight, not having a teaspoonful of news to send him. I will beg your ladyship to tell him so.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

Strawberry-hill, Friday night, 1779.

I AM not at all surpris'd, my dear madam, at the intrepidity of Mrs. D——¹; she always was the heroic daughter of a hero. Her sense and coolness never forsake her. I, who am not so firm, shuddered at your ladyship's account. Now that she has stood fire for four hours, I hope she will give as clear proofs of her understanding, of which I have as high opinion as of her courage, and not return in any danger.

I am to dine at Ditton to-morrow, and will certainly talk on the subject you recommend—yet I am far, till I have heard more, from thinking with your ladyship, that more troops and artillery at Jersey would be desirable. Any considerable quantity of either, especially of the former, cannot be spared at this moment, when so big a cloud hangs over this island, nor would any number avail if the French should be masters at sea. A large garrison would but tempt the French thither, were it but to distress this country; and, what is worse, would encourage Mr. Conway to make an impracticable defence. If he is to remain in a situation so unworthy of him, I confess I had rather he was totally incapable of making any defence. I love him enough not to murmur at his exposing himself where his country and his honour demand him—but I would not have him measure himself in a place untenable against very superior force. My present comfort is, as to him, that France at this moment has a far vaster object. I have good reason to believe the government knows that a great army is ready to embark at St. Maloes, but will not stir till after a sea-fight, which we do not know but may be engaged at this moment. Our fleet is allowed to be the finest ever set forth by this country—but it is inferior in number by seventeen ships to the united squadron of the Bourbons. France, if successful, means to pour in a vast many thousands on us, and has threatened to burn the capital itself. Jersey, my dear madam, does not enter into a calculation of such magnitude. The moment is singularly awful—yet the vaunts of enemies are rarely executed successfully and ably. Have we trampled America under our foot?

¹ The packet in which she was crossing from Dover to Ostend was taken by a French frigate after a running fight of several hours. E.

You

You have too good sense, madam, to be imposed upon by my arguments, if they are insubstantial. You do know that I have had my terrors for Mr. Conway; but at present they are out of the question, from the insignificance of his island. Do not listen to rumours, nor believe a single one till it has been canvassed over and over. Fear, folly, fifty motives, will coin new reports every hour at such a conjuncture. When one is totally void of credit and power, patience is the only wisdom. I have seen dangers still more imminent. They were dispersed. Nothing happens in proportion to what is meditated. Fortune, whatever fortune is, is more constant than is the common notion. I do not give this as one of my solid arguments, but I have always encouraged myself in being superstitious on the favourable side. I never, like most superstitious people, believe auguries against my wishes. We have been fortunate in the escape of Mrs. D—, and in the defeat at Jersey even before Mr. Conway arrived; and thence I depend on the same future prosperity. From the authority of persons who do not reason on such airy hopes, I am seriously persuaded, that if the fleets engage, the enemy will not gain advantage without deep-felt loss, enough probably to dismay their invasion. Coolness may succeed, and then negotiation.—Surely, if we can weather the summer, we shall, obstinate as we are against conviction, be compelled by the want of money to relinquish our ridiculous pretensions, now proved to be utterly impracticable; for, with an inferior navy at home, can we assert sovereignty over America? It is a contradiction in terms and in fact. It may be hard of digestion to relinquish it, but it is impossible to pursue it. Adieu, my dear madam! I have not left room for a line more.

L E T T E R X V I I .

Strawberry-hill, Tuesday night, June 8, 1779.

YOU frightened me for a minute, my dear madam; but every letter since has given me pleasure, by telling me how rapidly you recovered, and how perfectly well you are again. Pray, however, do not give me any more such joys. I shall be quite content with your remaining immortal, without the foil of any alarm. You gave all your friends a panic, and may trust their attachment without renewing it. I received as many inquiries the next day as if an archbishop was in danger, and all the bench hoped he was going to heaven.

O

Mr.

Mr. Conway wonders I do not talk of Voltaire's Memoirs.—Lord blefs me ! I faw it two months ago ; the Lucans brought it from Paris and lent it to me : nay, and I have feen moft of it before ; and I believe this an imperfect copy, for it ends no how at all. Befides, it was quite out of my head. Lord Melcombe's Diary put that and every thing elfe out of my mind. I wonder much more at Mr. Conway's not talking of this ! It gossips about the living as familiarly as a modern newspaper. I long to hear what ——— fays about it. I wifh the newspapers were as accurate ! They have been circumftantial about *lady Walsingham's* birth-day clothes, which to be fure one is glad to know, only unluckily there is no fuch perfon^{*}. However, I dare to fay that her drefs was very becoming, and that fhe looked charmingly.

The month of June, according to cuftom immemorial, is as cold as Christmas. I had a fire laft night, and all my rofebuds, I believe, would have been very glad to fit by it. I have other grievances to boot ; but as they are annuals too, videlicet,—people to fee my houfe,—I will not torment your ladyfhip with them : yet I know nothing elfe. None of my neighbours are come into the country yet: one would think all the dowagers were elected into the new parliament. Adieu, my dear madam !

^{*} The title of Walsingham was not revived in the family of de Grey till the year 1780. E.



Heath Sculp.

Hannah More.

Pub^d as the Act directs May 1st 1798. by G.C. & J. Robinson, Paternoster Row London.

L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

MRS. H. MORE,

From the Year 1784 to the Year 1796.

VOL. V.

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L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

MRS. H. MORE,

From the Year 1784 to the Year 1796.

L E T T E R I.

To MRS. H. MORE.

Strawberry-hill, November 13, 1784.

THANK you a thousand times, dear madam, for your obliging letter and the new *Bristol stones* you have sent me, which would pass on a more skilful lapidary than I am for having been brillanted by a professed artist, if you had not told me that they came shining out of a native mine, and had no foreign diamond-dust to polish them. Indeed can one doubt any longer that Bristol is as rich and warm a soil as India? I am convinced it has been so of late years, though I question its having been so luxuriant in alderman Canning's days; and I have MORE reasons for thinking so, than from the marvels of Chatterton.—But I will drop metaphors, lest some nabob should take me *au pié de la lettre*, fit out an expedition, plunder your city, and massacre you for weighing *too many* carats.

Seriously, madam, I am surprised—and chiefly at the kind of genius of this unhappy female¹. Her ear, as you remark, is perfect—but that being a

¹ Mrs. Yearley, the milkwoman of Bristol.

gift of nature, amazes me less. Her expressions are more exalted than poetic; and discover taste, as you say, rather than discover flights of fancy and wild ideas, as one should expect. I should therefore advise her quitting blank verse, which wants the highest colouring to distinguish it from prose; whereas her taste, and probably good sense, might give sufficient beauty to her rhymes.

Her not being learned is another reason against her writing in blank verse. Milton employed all his reading, nay all his geographic knowledge, to enrich his language—and succeeded. They who have imitated him in that particular, have been mere monkeys; and they who neglected it, flat and poor.

Were I not persuaded by the samples you have sent me, madam, that this woman has talents, I should not advise her encouraging her propensity, lest it should divert her from the care of her family, and, after the novelty is over, leave her worse than she was. When the late queen patronised Stephen Duck, who was only a wonder at first, and had not genius enough to support the character he had promised, twenty artisans and labourers turned poets, and starved. Your poetess can scarce be more miserable than she is, and even the reputation of being an authoress may procure her customers: but as poetry is one of your least excellencies, madam (your virtues will forgive me), I am sure you will not only give her councils for her works, but for her conduct; and your gentleness will blend them so judiciously, that she will mind the friend as well as the mistress. She must remember that she is a Lactilla, not a Pastora; and is to tend real cows, not Arcadian sheep.

What! if I should go a step farther, dear madam, and take the liberty of reproving you for putting into this poor woman's hands such a frantic thing as the Castle of Otranto? It was fit for nothing but the age in which it was written; an age in which much was known; that required only to be amused, nor cared whether its amusements were conformable to truth and the models of good sense; that could not be spoiled; was in no danger of being too credulous; and rather wanted to be brought back to imagination, than to be led astray by it:—but you will have made a hurly-burly in this poor woman's head, which it cannot develop and digest.

I will not reprove, without suggesting something in my turn. Give her Dryden's

Dryden's Cock and Fox, the standard of good sense, poetry, nature, and ease. I would recommend others of his tales: but her imagination is already too gloomy, and should be enlivened; for which reason I do not name Mr. Gray's Eton Ode and Church-yard. Prior's Solomon (for I doubt his Alma, though far superior, is too learned for her limited reading) would be very proper. In truth, I think the cast of the age (I mean in its compositions) is too sombre. The flimsy giantry of Ossian has introduced mountainous horrors. The exhibitions at Somerset-house are crowded with Brobdignag ghosts. Read and explain to her a charming poetic familiarity called the Blue-Stocking Club. If she has not your other pieces, might I take the liberty, madam, of begging you to buy them for her, and let me be in your debt? And that your lessons may win their way more easily, even though her heart be good, will you add a guinea or two, as you see proper?—And though I do not love to be named, yet, if it would encourage a subscription, I should have no scruple. It will be best to begin moderately; for, if she should take Hippocrene for Pactolus, we may hasten her ruin, not contribute to her fortune.

On recollection, you had better call me Mr. any-body, than name my name, which I fear is in bad odour at Bristol, on poor Chatterton's account; and it may be thought that I am atoning his ghost: though, if his friends would show my letters to him, you would find that I was as tender to him as to your milkwoman: but *that* they have never done, among other instances of their injustice. However, I beg you to say nothing on that subject, as I have declared I would not.

I have seen our excellent friend in Clarges-street^{*}: she complains as usual of her deafness; but I assure you it is at least not worse, nor is her weakness. Indeed I think both her and Mr. Vesey better than last winter. When will you *blue-stock* yourself and come amongst us? Consider how many of us are veterans; and though we do not trudge on foot according to the institution, we may be out at heels—and the heel, you know, madam, has never been privileged. I am, with the sincerest regard, madam,

Your much obliged and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

^{*} Mrs. Vesey.

LETTER

LETTER II.¹

Berkeley-square, April 5th, 1785.

HAD I not heard part of your conversation with Mrs. Carter the other night, madam, I should certainly not have discovered the authorefs of the very ingenious anticipation of our future jargon. How should I? I am not fortunate enough to know all your talents;—nay, I question whether you yourself suspect all you possess. Your *Bas-bleus* is in a style very different from any of your other productions that I have seen; and this letter, which shows your intuition into the degeneracy of our language, has a vein of humour and satire that could not be calculated from your *Bas-bleus*, in which good-nature and good-humour had made a great deal of learning wear all the

¹ This is an answer to the following anonymous letter sent to Mr. Walpole by Mrs. H. More, ridiculing the prevailing adoption of French idioms into the English language. The letter affects to anticipate that corrupt style of composition which the present bad taste may probably establish in another century. In this satirical epistle there is neither one French word nor one English idiom.

A specimen of the English language, as it will probably be written and spoken in the next century. In a letter from a lady to her friend in the reign of George the fifth.

Dear madam,

A-la-mode-castle,
June 20, 1840.

I no sooner found myself here than I visited my new apartment, which is composed of five pieces: the small room which gives upon the garden is practised through the great one, and there is no other issue. As I was quite exceeded with fatigue, I had no sooner made my toilette than I let myself fall on a bed of repose, where sleep came to surprise me.

My lord and I are in the intention to make good cheer, and a great expence, and this country is in possession to furnish wherewithal to amuse oneself. All that England has of illustrious, all that youth has of amiable, or beauty of ravishing, sees itself in this quarter. Render yourself here then, my friend, and you shall find assembled all that there is of best, whether for letters, whether for birth.

Yesterday I did my possible to give to eat: the dinner was of the last perfection, and the wines left nothing to desire. The repast was seasoned with a thousand rejoicing fallies, full of salt and agreement, and one more brilliant than another. Lady Frances charmed me as for the first time; she is made to paint; has a great air, and has infinitely of expression in her physiognomy: her manners have as much of natural, as her figure has of interesting.

I had prayed lady B—to be of this dinner, as I had heard nothing but good of her: but I am now disabused on her subject; she is past her first youth, has very little instruction, is inconsequent and subject to caution: but having evaded with one of her pretenders, her reputation has been committed by the bad faith of a friend, on whose fidelity she reposed herself. She is therefore fallen into devotion, goes no more to spectacles, and play is defended at her house. Though she affects a mortal serious, I observed that her eyes were of intelligence with those of sir James, near whom I had taken care to plant myself, though this is always a sacrifice which costs. Sir James is a great fayer of nothings; it is a spoilt mind; full of fatuity and pretension; his conversation is a tissue of impertinencies, and the bad tone which reigns at present has put the last hand to his defects. He makes but little case of his word; but as he lends himself to whatever is proposed of amusing, the women all throw themselves at his head.

Adieu.

case

ease of familiarity. I did wish you to write another Percy—but I beg now that you will first produce a specimen of *all* the various manners in which you can shine; for, since you are as modest as if your issue were illegitimate, I don't know but, like some females really in fault, you would stifle some of your pretty infants, rather than be detected and blush.

In the mean time, I beseech you not only to print *your specimen of the language that is to be in fashion*, but have it entered at Stationer's-hall; or depend upon it, if ever a copy falls into the hands of a fine gentleman yet unborn, who shall be able both to read and write, he will adopt your letter for his own, and the Galimatias will give the ton to the court, as Euphues¹ did near two hundred years ago; and then you will have corrupted our language instead of defending it:—and surely it is not *your* interest, madam, to have pure English grow obsolete.

If you do not promise to grant my request, I will show your letter every where to those that are worthy of seeing it;—that is, indeed, in very few places;—for you *shall* have the honour of it. It is one of those compositions that prove themselves standards, by begetting imitations; and if the genuine parent is unknown, it will be ascribed to every body that is supposed (in his own set) to have more wit than the rest of the world. I should be diverted, I own, to hear it faintly disavowed by some who would wish to pass for its authors:—but still there is more pleasure in doing justice to merit, than in drawing vain pretensions into a scrape; and therefore I think you and I had better be honest and acknowledge it, though to you (for I am out of the question, but as evidence) it will be painful; for though the proverb says, “Tell truth and shame the devil,” I believe he is never half so much confounded as a certain amiable young gentlewoman who is discovered to have more taste and abilities than she ever ventured to ascribe to herself even in the most private dialogues with her own heart; especially when that native friend is so pure as to have no occasion to make allowances even for self-love. For my part, I am most seriously obliged to you, madam, for so agreeable and kind a communication, and am, with sincere regard,

Your most grateful and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ “Euphues and his England” was written by John Lilly, and published in quarto in 1580. Edward Blount, in the preface to Lilly's Comedies, published in 1632, says—“Our nation is in his debt for a *new English* which he taught them. *Euphues and his England* began first that language. All our ladies were then his scholars; and that beauty in court that could not parley *Euphuism* was as little regarded as she which now there speaks not French.” E.

LETTER III.

Berkeley-square, Feb. 9, 1785.

IT is very cruel, my dear madam, when you send me such charming lines¹, and say such kind and flattering things to me and of me, that I cannot even thank you with my own poor hand; and yet my hand is as much obliged to you as my eye and ear and understanding. My hand was in great pain when your present arrived. I opened it directly, and sat to reading, till your music and my own vanity composed a quieting draught that glided to the ends of my fingers, and lulled the throbs into the deliquium that attends opium when it does not put one absolutely to sleep. I don't believe that the deity who formerly practised both poetry and physic, when gods got their livelihood by more than one profession, ever gave a recipe in rhyme; and therefore, since Dr. Johnson has prohibited application to Pagan divinities, and Mr. Burke has not struck medicine and poetry out of the list of sinecures, I wish you may get a patent for life for exercising both faculties. It would be a comfortable event for me; for, since I cannot wait on you to thank you, nor dare ask you

—— to call your doves yourself,

and visit me in your Parnassian quality, I might send for you as my *physicianess*. Yet why should not I ask you to come and see me? You are not such a prude as to

—— blush to show compassion,
though it should

—— not chance this year to be the fashion².

And I can tell you, that powerful as your poetry is, and old as I am, I believe a visit from you would do me as much good almost as your verses.

In the mean time, I beg you to accept of an addition to your Strawberry editions; and believe me to be, with the greatest gratitude,

Your too much honoured

And most obliged humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

The poem of Florio, dedicated to Mr. Walpole.

² Vide Florio.

LETTER IV.

Berkeley-square, Jan. 1, 1787.

DO not imagine, dear madam, that I pretend in the most distant manner to pay you for charming poetry with insipid prose; much less that I acquit a debt of gratitude for flattering kindness and friendship, by a meagre tale that does not even aim at celebrating you. No; I have but two motives for offering you the accompanying trifle¹: the first, to prove that the moment I have finished any thing, *you* are of the earliest in my thoughts: the second, that, coming from my press, I wish it may be added to your Strawberry editions. It is so far from being designed for the public, that I have printed but forty copies; which I do not mention to raise its value, though it will with mere collectors, but lest you should lend it and lose it, when I may not be able to supply its place.

Christina, indeed, has some title to connection with you, both from her learning and her moral writings; as you are justly entitled to a lodging in her Cité des Dames, where I am sure her three patronesses would place you, as a favourite eleve of some of their still more amiable sisters, who must at this moment be condoling with their unfortunate sister Gratitude, whose vagabond foundling has so basely disgraced her and herself. You fancied that Mrs. Y—— was a spurious issue of a muse; and to be sure, with all their immortal virginity, the parish of Parnassus has been sadly charged with their bantlings: and as nobody knows the fathers, no wonder some of the misses have turned out woful reprobates!

I was very unlucky in not calling at Mrs. Vesey's the evening you was there for a moment; but I hope for better fortune soon, and will be much obliged to you if you will tell me when I may hope for that pleasure.

Your most grateful and faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Christine de Pise.

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LETTER V.

Berkeley-square, February 23, 1787.

DEAR MADAM,

I NOT only send you *la Cité des Dames*, but Christina's Life of Charles V. which will entertain you more, and which, when I wrote my brief history of her, I did not know she had actually composed. Mr. Dutens told me of it very lately, and actually borrowed it for me—and but yesterday my French bookseller sent me three-and-twenty other volumes of those *Mémoires Historiques*¹, which I had ordered him to get for me, and which will keep my eyes to the oar for some time, whenever I have leisure to sail through such an ocean; and yet I shall embark with pleasure, late as it is for me to undertake such a hugeous voyage:—but a crew of old gossips are no improper company, and we shall sit in a warm cabin, and hear and tell old stories of past times.

Pray keep the volume as long as you please, and borrow as many more as you please, for each volume is a detached piece. Yet I do not suppose your friends will allow you much time for reading in town; and I hope I shall often be the better for their hindering you.

Yours most sincerely and most cordially,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VI.

Strawberry-hill, October 14, 1787.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I AM shocked for human nature at the repeated malevolence of this woman!—The rank soil of riches we are accustomed to see overrun with weeds and thistles; but who could expect that the kindest seeds sown on poverty and dire misfortunes, should meet with nothing but a rock at bottom? Catherine de Medici, suckled by popes and transplanted to a throne, seems more excusable. Thank heaven, madam, for giving you so excellent

¹ *Collection des meilleurs ouvrages François composés par des femmes*, by mademoiselle Keralio.

a heart—aye, and so good a head. You are not only benevolence itself, but, with fifty times the genius of ———, you are void of vanity. How strange that vanity should expel gratitude!—Does not the wretched woman owe her fame to you, as well as her affluence? I can testify your labours for both. Dame ——— reminds me of the Troubadours, those vagrants whom I used to admire till I knew their history; and who used to pour out trumpery verses, and flatter or abuse accordingly as they were housed and clothed, or dismissed to the next parish:—Yet you did not set this person in the stocks, after procuring an annuity for her!

I beg your pardon for renewing so disgusting a subject, and will never mention it again. You have better amusement; you love good works; a temper superior to revenge.

I have again seen our poor friend in Clarges-street: her faculties decay rapidly; and of course she suffers less. She has not an acquaintance in town; and yet told me the town was very full, and that she had had a good deal of company. Her health is re-established, and we must now be content that her mind is not restless. My pity now feels most for Mrs. Hancock¹; whose patience is inexhaustible, though not insensible.

Mrs. Piozzi, I hear, has two volumes of Dr. Johnson's letters ready for publication. Bruce is printing his Travels; which I suppose will prove that his narratives were fabulous, as he will scarce repeat them by the press. These and two more volumes of Mr. Gibbon's History are all the literary news I know. France seems sunk indeed in all respects. What stuff are their theatrical goods, their Richards, Ninas and Tarares! But when their Figaro could run threescore nights, how despicable must their taste be grown²! I rejoice that their political intrigues are not more creditable. I

¹ A lady who lived with Mrs. Vesey.

² Mr. Walpole had never seen Figaro acted, nor had he been at Paris for many years before it appeared: he was not therefore aware of the bold, witty and continued allusions of almost every scene and of almost every incident of that comedy to the most popular topics and the most distinguished characters of the day.—The freedom with which it treated arbitrary government and all its establishments, while they all yet continued in unwelcome force in France, and the

moral conduct of each individual of the piece exactly suiting the no-morality of the audience, joined to the admirable manner in which it was acted, certainly must be allowed to have given it its greatest vogue.—But even now, when most of these temporary advantages no longer exist, whoever was well acquainted with the manners, habits and anecdotes of Paris at the time of the first appearance of Figaro, will always admire in it a combination of keen and pointed satire, easy wit, and laughable incident. E.

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do not dislike the French from the vulgar antipathy between neighbouring nations, but for their insolent and unfounded airs of superiority. In arms we have almost always outshone them: and till they have excelled Newton, and come near to Shakespeare, pre-eminence in genius must remain with us. I think they are most entitled to triumph over the Italians, as with the most meagre and inharmonious of all languages the French have made more of that poverty in tragedy and eloquence, than the Italians have done with the language the most capable of both—But I did not mean to send you a dissertation. I hope it will not be long before you remove to Hampton—Yet why should I wish that?—You will only be geographically nearer to London till February.—Cannot you now and then sleep at the Adelphi on a visit to poor Vesey and your friends, and let one know if you do?

Yours, my dear madam, most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VII.

Strawberry-hill, July 4, 1788.

I AM soundly rejoiced, my dear madam, that the present summer is more favourable to me than the last; and that, instead of not answering my letters in three months, you open the campaign first.—May not I flatter myself that it is a symptom of your being in better health? I wish however you had told me so in positive words, and that all your complaints have left you. Welcome as is your letter, it would have been ten times more welcome, bringing me that assurance; for don't think I forget how ill you was last winter. As letters, you say, now keep their coaches¹, I hope those from Bristol will call often at my door. I promise you I will never be denied to them.

No botanist am I; nor wished to learn from *you* of all the muses that *pip*ing has a new signification. I had rather that *you* handled an oaten pipe

¹ Meaning the establishment of the mail-coach.

than

than a carnation one—yet setting layers, I own, is preferable to reading newspapers, one of the chronical maladies of this age.—Every body reads them, nay quotes them, though every body knows they are stuffed with lies or blunders.—How should it be otherwise? If any extraordinary event happens, who but must hear it before it descends through a coffee-house to the runner of a daily-paper? They who are always wanting news, are wanting to hear they don't know what. A lower species indeed is that of the scribes you mention, who every night compose a journal for the satisfaction of such *illiterati*, and feed them with all the vices and misfortunes of every private family—nay, they now call it a *duty* to publish all those calamities which decency to wretched relations used in compassion to suppress—I mean self-murder in particular. Mr. —'s was detailed at length; and to-day that of lord — and —. The pretence is, in terrorem, like the absurd stake and highway of our ancestors; as if there were a precautionary potion for madness, or the stigma of a newspaper were more dreadful than death. Daily journalists, to be sure, are most respectable magistrates! Yes, much like the cobblers that Cromwell made peers.

I do lament your not going to Mr. Conway's play¹: both the author and actors deserved such an auditor as you, and you deserved to hear them.—However, I do not pity *good* people, who out of virtue lose or miss any pleasures. Those pastimes fleet as fast as those of the wicked; but when gone, you saints can sit down and feast on your self-denial, and drink bumpers of satisfaction to the health of your own merit.—So truly I don't pity you.

You say you hear no news, yet you quote Mr. Topham; therefore why should I tell you that the king is going to Cheltenham? or that the Baccelli lately danced at the opera at Paris with a blue bandeau on her forehead inscribed, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*?—Now who can doubt but she is as pure as the countess of Salisbury²? Was not it ingenious? and was not the ambassador so to allow it?—No doubt he took it for a compliment to his own knee.

Well! would we committed nothing but follies! What do we not commit when the abolition of slavery hitches!

¹False Appearances, translated from the French whose garter has been attributed the foundation by Mr. Conway, and acted at Richmond-house. of the order of the Garter. E.

²The countess of Salisbury, to the fall of

Though

Though Cato died, though Tully spoke,
 Though Brutus dealt the god-like stroke,
 Yet perish'd fated Rome!—

You have written; and I fear that even if Mr. Sheridan speaks, trade, the modern religion, will predominate. Adieu, my dear madam!

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VIII.

Strawberry-hill, July 12, 1788.

WON'T you repent having opened the correspondence, my dear madam, when you find my letters come so thick upon you? In this instance, however, I am only to blame in part, for being too ready to take advice, for the sole reason for which advice ever is taken, because it fell in with my inclination.

You said in your last that you feared you took up time of mine to the prejudice of the public; implying, I imagine, that I might employ it in composing. Waving both your compliment and my own vanity, I will speak very seriously to you on that subject, and with exact truth. My simple writings have had better fortune than they had any reason to expect; and I fairly believe, in a great degree, because gentlemen-writers, who do not write for interest, are treated with some civility if they do not write absolute nonsense. I think so, because I have not unfrequently known much better works than mine much more neglected, if the name, fortune, and situation of the authors were below mine. I wrote early, from youth, spirits and vanity, and from both the last when the first no longer existed. I now shudder when I reflect on my own boldness; and with mortification, when I compare my own writings with those of any great authors. This is so true, that I question whether it would be possible for me to sum up courage to publish any thing I have written, if I could recall time past and should yet think as I think at present.—So much for what is over and out of my power. As to writing now, I have totally forsworn the profession,
 for

for two solid reasons. One I have already told you, and it is, that I know my own writings are trifling and of no depth. The other is, that, light and futile as they were, I am sensible they are better than I could compose now. I am aware of the decay of the middling parts I had, and others may be still more sensible of it. How do I know but I am superannuated? Nobody will be so coarse as to tell me so—but if I published dotage, all the world would tell me so—And who but runs that risk who is an author after seventy? What happened to the greatest author of this age, and who certainly retained a very considerable portion of his abilities for ten years after my age? Voltaire, at 84 I think, went to Paris to receive the incense, in person, of his countrymen, and to be witness of their admiration of a tragedy he had written at that Methusalem-age. Incense he did receive till it choked him; and at the exhibition of his play he was actually crowned with laurel in the box where he sat—But what became of his poor play?—It died as soon as he did—was buried with him—and no mortal, I dare to say, has ever redde a line of it since, it was so bad.

As I am neither by a thousandth part so great, nor a quarter so little, I will herewith send you a fragment that an accidental rencounter set me upon writing, and which I found so flat, that I would not finish it. Don't believe that I am either begging praise by the stale artifice of hoping to be contradicted; or that I think there is any occasion to make you discover my caducity. No; but the fragment contains a curiosity—English verses written by a French prince of the blood¹, and which at first I had a mind to add to my Royal and Noble Authors; but as he was not a royal author of ours, and as I could not please myself with an account of him, I shall revert to my old resolution of not exposing my pen's grey hairs.

Of one passage I must take notice; it is a little indirect sneer at our crowd of authoresses. My choosing to send this to *you* is a proof that I think you an author, that is, a classic. But in truth I am nauseated by the madams —, &c. and the host of novel-writers in petticoats, who think they imitate what is inimitable. Evelina and Cecilia. Your candour I know will not agree with me, when I tell you I am not at all charmed with miss —

¹See Appendix to Royal and Noble Authors, page 564, vol. I. of this edition. E.

and!

and Mr. ——— piping to one another; but *you* I exhort, and would encourage to write; and flatter myself you will never be royally gagged and promoted to fold mullins, as has been lately wittily said on miss B——, in the list of 500 living authors. *Your* writings promote virtues; and their increasing editions prove their worth and utility.—If you question my sincerity, can you doubt my admiring you, when you have gratified my self-love so amply in your *Bas-bleu*? Still, as much as I love your writings, I respect yet more your heart and your goodness. You are so good, that I believe you would go to heaven, even though there were no Sunday, and only six *working* days in the week. Adieu, my best madam!

Yours most cordially,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. On recollection, I doubt I have before given you the same reasons for my lying fallow that I have in this letter. If so, why, it is like an old man to repeat himself—but at least I will not do so in print.

LETTER IX.

Strawberry-hill, September 22, 1788.

I DON'T like to defraud you of your compassion, my good friend, profuse as you are of it. I really suffered scarce any pain at all from my last fit of gout. I have known several persons who think there is a dignity in complaining; and, if you ask how they do, reply, Why—I *am*—pretty well—to-day; but if you knew what I suffered *yesterday*!—Now methinks nobody has a right to tax another for pity on what is past; and besides, complaint of what is over can only make the hearer glad that you are in pain no longer. Yes, yes, my dear madam, you generally place your pity so profitably, that you shall not waste a drop upon me, who ought rather to be congratulated on being so well at my age.

Much less shall I allow you to make apologies for your admirable and
proper

proper conduct towards your poor *Protegée*. And now you have told me the behaviour of a certain great dame, I will confess to you that I have known it some months by accident—nay, and tried to repair it. I prevailed on lady —, who as readily undertook the commission, and told the countess of her treatment of you—Alas! the answer was, “It is too late; I have no money.”—No! but she has, if she has a diamond left. I am indignant—yet, do you know, not at this duchess, or that countess, but at the invention of ranks, and titles, and pre-eminence. I used to hate that king and t’other prince—but, alas! on reflection I find the censure ought to fall on human nature in general. They are made of the same stuff as we, and dare we say what we should be in their situation? Poor creatures! think how they are educated, or rather, corrupted early, how flattered!—To be educated properly, they should be led through hovels, and hospitals, and prisons. Instead of being reprimanded (and perhaps immediately after, *sugar-plum’d*) for not learning their Latin or French grammar, they now and then should be kept fasting, and, if they cut their finger, should have no plaister till it festered. No part of a royal brat’s memory, which is good enough, should be burthened but with the remembrance of human sufferings. In short, I fear our nature is so liable to be corrupted and perverted by greatness, rank, power, and wealth, that I am inclined to think that virtue is the compensation to the poor for the want of riches—nay, I am disposed to believe, that the first footpad or highwayman had been a man of quality, or a prince, who could not bear having wasted his fortune, and was too lazy to work; for a beggar-born would think labour a more natural way of getting a livelihood than venturing his life. I have something a similar opinion about common women. No modest girl thinks of many men, till she has been in love with *one*, been ruined by him, and abandoned.—But to return to my theme—and it will fall heavy on yourself—Could the milk-woman have been so bad, if you had merely kept her from starving, instead of giving her opulence? The soil, I doubt, was bad; but it could not have produced the rank weed of ingratitude, if you had not dunged it with gold, which rises from rock, and seems to meet with a congenial bed when it falls on the human heart.

And so Dr. Warton imagines I am writing *Walpoliana*!—No, in truth, nor any thing else, nor shall—nor will I go out in a jest-book. Age has not only made me prudent, but, luckily, lazy—and without the latter ex-

tinguisher, I do not know but that farthing candle my discretion would let my snuff of life flit to the last sparkle of folly, like what children call the parson and clerk in a bit of burnt paper. You see by my *writability* in pressing my letters on you, that my pen has still a colt's tooth left; but I never indulge the poor old child with more paper than this small-sized sheet—I do not give it enough to make a paper kite and fly abroad on wings of booksellers. You ought to continue writing, for you do good by your writings, or at least mean it; and if a virtuous intention fails, it is a sort of coin, which, though thrown away, still makes the donor worth more than he was before he gave it away. I delight too in the temperature of your piety, and that you would not see the enthusiastic exorcist. How shocking to suppose that the Omnipotent Creator of worlds delegates his power to a momentary insect to eject supernatural spirits that he had permitted to infest another insect, and had permitted to vomit blasphemies against himself!—Pray do not call *that* enthusiasm, but delirium.—I pity real enthusiasts, but I would shave their heads and take away some blood. The exorcist's associates are in a worse predicament, I doubt, and hope to *make* enthusiasts. If such abominable impostors were not rather a subject of indignation, I could smile at the rivalry between them and the animal magnetists, who are inveigling fools into their different pales—And alas! while folly has a shilling left, there will be enthusiasts and quack doctors, and there will be slaves while there are kings or sugar-planters. I have remarked, that though Jesuits, &c. travel to distant East and West to propagate their religion and traffic, I never heard of one that made a journey into Asia or Africa to preach the doctrines of liberty, though those regions are so deplorably oppressed. Nay, I much doubt whether ever any chaplain of the regiments we have sent to India has once whispered to a native of Bengal, that there are milder forms of government than those of his country—No; security of property is not a wholesome doctrine to be inculcated in a land where the soil produces diamonds and gold!—In short, if your Bristol exorcist believes he can cast out devils, why does he not go to Leadenhall-street? There is a company whose name is legion.

By your *gambols*, as you call them, after the most ungamboling peerefs in christendom, and by your jaunts, I conclude to my great satisfaction, that you are quite well. Change of scene and air are good for your spirits; and September, like all our old ladies, has given itself May airs, and must have
made

made your journey very pleasant—Yet you will be glad to get back to your Cowslip-green, though it may offer you nothing but Michaelmas daisies. When you do leave it, I wish you could persuade Mrs. Garrick to settle sooner in London. There is full as good hay to be made in town at Christmas as at Hampton, and some hay-makers that will wish for you, particularly

Your most sincere friend,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER X.

Berkeley-square, April 22, 1789.

DEAR MADAM,

AS perhaps you have not yet seen *the Botanic Garden*. (which I believe I mentioned to you), I lend it you to read. The poetry, I think, you will allow most admirable; and difficult it was no doubt. If you are not a naturalist, as well as a poetess, perhaps you will lament that so powerful a talent has been wasted to so little purpose; for where is the use of describing in verse what nobody can understand without a long prosaic explanation of every article? It is still more unfortunate that there is not a symptom of plan in the whole poem. The lady flowers and their lovers enter in pairs or trios, or &c. as often as the couples in Cassandra, and you are not a whit more interested about one heroine and her swain than about another. The families are beautiful, fine and sometimes sublime: and thus the episodes will be better remembered than the mass of the poem itself, which one cannot call *the subject*; for could one call it a subject, if any body had composed a poem on the matches formerly made in the Fleet, where, as Waitwell says, in *The Way of the World*, they stood like couples in rows ready to begin a country dance?—Still, I flatter myself, you will agree with me that the author is a great poet, and could raise the passions, and possesses all the requisites of the art. I found but a single bad verse: in the last canto one line ends *e'er long*.

You will perhaps be surprised at meeting a Truffle converted into a nymph, and inhabiting a palace studded with emeralds and rubies like a saloon in the Arabian Nights!

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I had a more particular motive for sending this poem to *you*: you will find the bard espousing your poor Africans. There is besides, which will please you too, a handsome panegyric on *the apostle of humanity*, Mr. Howard.

Mrs. Garrick, whom I had the pleasure of meeting in her own box at Mr. Conway's play, gave me a much better account of your health, which delighted me. I am sure, my good friend, you partake of my joy at the great success of his comedy. The additional character of the abbé pleased much—It was added by the advice of the players to enliven it—that is, to stretch the jaws of the pit and galleries.—I sighed silently; for it was originally so genteel and of a piece, that I was sorry to have it tumbled by coarse applauses—But this is a secret.

I am going to Twickenham for two days on an affignation with the Spring, and to avoid the riotous devotion of to-morrow.

A gentleman essayist has printed what he calls some strictures on my Royal and Noble Authors, in revenge for my having spoken irreverently (on bishop Burnet's authority) of the earl of Anglesey, who had the honour, it seems, of being the gentleman's grandfather. He asks me, by the way, why it was more ridiculous in the duke of Newcastle to write his two comedies, than in the duke of Buckingham to write *The Rehearsal*?—Alas! I know but one reason; which is, that it is less ridiculous to write one excellent comedy, than two very bad ones. Peace be with such answerers! Adieu, my dear madam!

Yours most cordially,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XI.

Strawberry-hill, June 23, 1789.

MADAM HANNAH,

YOU are an errant reprobate, and grow wickeder and wickeder every day. You deserve to be treated like a *negre*; and your favourite Sunday,

5.

to

to which you are so partial that you treat the other poor six days of the week as if they had no souls to be saved, should, if I could have my will,

— shine no Sabbath-day for you.

Now, don't fimper, and look as innocent as if virtue would not melt in your mouth—Can you deny the following charges?

I lent you The Botanic Garden, and you returned it without writing a syllable, or saying where you were or whither you was going—I suppose, for fear I should know how to direct to you.—Why, if I did send a letter after you, could not you keep it three months without an answer, as you did last year?

In the next place, you and your *nine* accomplices, who by the way are too good in keeping you company, have clubbed the prettiest ¹ poem imaginable, and communicated it to Mrs. Boscawen, with injunctions not to give a copy of it—I suppose, because you are ashamed of having written a panegyric.—Whenever you *do* compose a satire, you are ready enough to publish it—at least whenever you do, you will din one to death with it—But now, mind your perverseness: that very pretty novel poem, and I must own it is charming, have you gone and spoiled, flying in the faces of your best friends the muses, and keeping no *measures* with them.—I'll be shot if they dictated two of the best lines with two syllables too much in each—nay, you have weakened one of them—

Ev'n Gardiner's mind

is far more expressive than *steadfast* Gardiner's—and, as Mrs. Boscawen says, Whoever knows any thing of Gardiner, could not want that superfluous epithet—and whoever does not, would not be the wiser for your foolish insertion—Mrs. Boscawen did not call it foolish, but I do.

The second line, as mesdemoiselles the muses handed it to you, miss, was,

And all be free and sav'd—

Not, *All be free and all be saved*: the second *all be* is a most unnecessary tautology. The poem was perfect and faultless, if you could have let it alone. I wonder how your mischievous flippancy could help maiming that

¹ Bonner's Ghost.

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most new and beautiful expression, *sponge of sins*—I should not have been surprised, as you love verses too full of feet, if you had changed it to *that scrubbing-brush of sins*.

Well! I will say no more now: but if you do not order me a copy of Bonner's Ghost incontinently, never dare to look my printing-house in the face again—Or come, I'll tell you what; I will forgive all your enormities, if you will let me print your poem. I like to filch a little immortality out of others, and the Strawberry press could never have a better opportunity. I will not haggle for the public—I will be content with printing only two hundred copies, of which you shall have half, and I half. It shall cost you nothing but a Yes. I only propose this, in case you do not mean to print it yourself. Tell me sincerely which you like—But as to not printing it at all, charming and unexceptionable as it is, you cannot be so preposterous.

I by no means have a thought of detracting from your own share in your own poem; but as I do suspect that it caught some inspiration from your perusal of the Botanic Garden, so I hope you will discover that *my* style is much improved by having lately studied ——'s travels—There I dipped, and not in St. Giles's pound, where one would think this author had been educated. Adieu!

Your friend, or mortal foe, as you behave on the present occasion,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XII.

Strawberry-hill, July 2, 1789.

I ALMOST think I shall never abuse you again—nay, I would not, did not it prove so extremely good for you. No walnut-tree is better for being threshed than you are; and though you have won my heart by your compliance, I don't know whether my conscience will not insist on my using you ill now and then; for is there any precedent for gratitude not giving way to every other duty? Gratitude, like an earl's eldest son, is but titular, and has no place upon *trials*—But I fear I am punning fillily, instead of thanking you seriously, as I do, for allowing me to print your lovely
verses.

verses¹. My press can confer no honour; but, when I offer it, it is a certain mark of my sincerity and esteem. It has been dedicated to friendship, to charity—too often to worthless self-love; sometimes to the rarity of the pieces, and sometimes to the merit of them—Now it will unite the first motive and the last.

My fall, for which you so kindly concern yourself, was not worth mentioning; for, as I only bruised the muscles of my side, instead of breaking a rib, camphire infused in arquebuse took off the pain and all consequences in five or six days: and one has no right to draw on the compassion of others for what one *has* suffered and is past. Some love to be pitied on that score, but forget that they only excite, in the best-natured, joy on their deliverance. You commend me too for not complaining of my chronical evil—but, my dear madam, I should be blameable for the reverse. If I would live to seventy-two, ought I not to compound for the incumbrances of old age? And who has fewer? And who has more cause to be thankful to Providence for his lot? The gout, it is true, comes frequently, but the fits are short, and very tolerable; the intervals are full health. My eyes are perfect, my hearing but little impaired, chiefly to whispers, for which I certainly have little occasion: my spirits never fail; and though my hands and feet are crippled, I can use both, and do not wish to box, wrestle, or dance a hornpipe. In short, I am just infirm enough to enjoy all the prerogatives of old age, and to plead them against any thing that I have not a mind to do. Young men must conform to every folly in fashion, drink when they had rather be sober, fight a duel if somebody else is wrong-headed, marry to please their fathers, not themselves, and shiver in a white waistcoat, because ancient almanacs, copying the Arabian, placed the month of June after May; though, when the style was reformed, it ought to have been intercalated between December and January.—Indeed, I have been so childish as to cut my hay for the same reason, and am now weeping over it by the fire-side.—But to come to business.

You must suffer me to print 200 copies; and if you approve it, I will send thirty to the bishop of London out of your quota—You may afterwards give him more, if you please.

¹ Bishop Bonner's Ghost.

I do

I do not propose putting your name, unless you desire it, as I think it would swear with the air of ancientry you have adopted in the signature and notes. The authoreſs will be no ſecret—and as it will certainly get into magazines, why ſhould not you deal privately before hand with ſome bookſeller, and have a ſecond edition ready to appear ſoon after mine is finiſhed? The difficulty of getting my edition at firſt, from the paucity of the number and from being only given as preſents, will make the ſecond edition eagerly fought for; and I do not ſee why my anticipating the publication ſhould deprive you of the profit.—Rather than do that, I would print a ſmaller number.—I wiſh to raiſe an additional appetite to that which every body has for your writings—I am ſure I did not mean to injure you. Pray think of this; there is time enough: I cannot begin to print under a week: my preſs has lain fallow for ſome time, and my printer muſt prepare ink, balls, &c. and as I have but one man, he cannot be expeditious.

I ſeriously do adviſe you to have a ſecond edition ready: why ſhould covetous bookſellers run away with *all* the advantages of your genius? They get enough by their ample ſhare of the ſale.

I will ſay no more, but to repeat my thanks for your conſent, which truly obliges me; and I am happy to have been the inſtrument of preſerving what your modeſty would have ſunk. My eſteem could not increaſe; but one likes to be connected by favours to thoſe one highly values. I am, dear madam,

Your moſt ſincere admirer and obedient humble ſervant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R XIII.

Strawberry-hill, July 10, 1789.

THOUGH I am touchy enough with thoſe I love, I did not think you dilatory, nor expect that answers to letters ſhould be as quick as repartees. I do pity you for the accident that made you think yourſelf remiſs. I enjoy your patient's recovery; but almoſt ſmiled unawares at the idea of her
being

being fopped, and coming out of the water bristling up her feathers and ermines, and assuming the dignity of a Jupiter Pluvius.

I beseech you not to fancy yourself vain on my being your printer: would Sappho be proud, though Aldus or Elzevir were her typographer? My press has no rank but from its narrowness, that is, from the paucity of its editions, and from being a volunteer.—But a truce to compliments, and to reciprocal humility. Pray tell me how I shall convey your parcel to you: the impression is begun. I shall not dare, *à le sujet*, to send a copy to Mrs. —; I do not know whether you will venture. Mrs. Boscawen shall have one, but it shall be in your name: so authorise me to present it, that neither of us may tell the whitest of fibs. Shall I deliver any others for you within my reach, to save you trouble?

I have no more corrections to make. I told you brutally at first of the only two faults I found, and you sacrificed them with the patience of a martyr; for I conclude that when a good poet knowingly sins against measure twice, he is persuaded that he makes amends by greater beauties: in such case docility deserves the palm-branch.

I do not applaud your declining a London edition—but you have been so tractable, that I will let you have your way in this, though you only make over profit to magazines. Being an honest printer myself, I have little charity for those banditti of my profession who pilfer from every body they find on the road. Adieu, my dear madam!

Yours most cordially and sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XIV.

Strawberry-hill, Monday night, July 20, 1789.

MY EXCELLENT FRIEND,

I NEVER shall be angry with your conscientiousness, though I will not promise never to scold it, as you know I think you sometimes carry it too far—and how pleasant to have a friend to scold on such grounds! I see all

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your

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your delicacy in what you call your *double treachery*, and your kind desire of connecting two of your friends. The seeds are sprung up already; and the bishop^{*} has already condescended to make me the first, and indeed so unexpected a visit, that, had I in the least surmised it, I should certainly, as became me, have prevented him.

One effect, however, I can tell you your pimping between us will have:—his lordship has, to please your partiality, flattered me so agreeably in the letter you *betrayed*, that I shall never write to you again without the dread of attempting the wit he is so liberal as to bestow on me; and then either way I must be dull or affected—though I hope to have the grace to prefer the former—and then you only will be the sufferer, as we both should by the latter.—But I will come to facts: they are plain bodies, can have nothing to do with wit, and yet are not dull to those who have any thing to do with them.

According to your order, I have delivered *Ghosts*[†] to Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Garrick, lady Juliana Penn, Mrs. Walsingham, and Mr. Pepys. Mr. Batt, I am told, leaves London to-day, so I shall reserve his to his return. This morning I carried his thirty to the bishop of London, who said modestly, he should not have expected above ten. I was delighted with the palace, with the venerable chapel, and its painted episcopalties in glass, and the brave hall, &c. &c. Though it rained, I would crawl to Bonner's chair.—In short, my satisfaction would have been complete, but for wanting the presence of that jesuitess, *the good old papist*[‡].

To-morrow departs for London, to be delivered to the Bristol coach at the White-horse-cellar in Piccadilly, a parcel containing sixty-four Ghosts—one of which is printed on brown for your own eating. There is but one more such, so you may preserve it like a relick. I know these two are not so good as the white: but, as rarities, a collector would give ten times more for them; and *uniquity* will make them valued more than the charming poetry.—I believe, if there was but one ugly woman in the world, she would occasion a longer war than Helen did.

You will find the bishop's letter in the parcel.—I did not breathe a hint

^{*} The bishop of London.

[†] Bonner's Ghost.

[‡] The signature to Bonner's Ghost.

of my having seen it, as I could not conjure up into my pale cheeks the blush I ought to exhibit on such flattery.

I pity you most sincerely for your almost drowned guest. Fortune seems to delight in throwing poor *Louisa* in your way, that you may exercise your unbounded charity and benevolence. Adieu! pray write—I need not *write* to you to *pray*—but I wish, when your knees have what the common people call a worky day, you would employ your hands the whole time.

Yours most cordially,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I believe I have blundered, and that your knees would call a week-day, a holiday.

LETTER XV.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. , 1789.

I KNOW whence you wrote last, but not where you are now; you gave me no hint. I believe you fly lest I should pursue, and as if you were angry that I have forced you to sprout into laurels. Yet you say you are vain of it, and that you are no philosopher.—Now, if you are vain, I am sure you *are* a philosopher; for it is a maxim of mine, and one of my own making, that there never was a philosopher that did not love *sweetmeats*.

You tell me too, that you like I should scold you—but since you have appeared as Bonner's ghost, I think I shall feel too much awe; for though (which I never expected would be in my power) I have made you stand *in a white sheet*, I doubt my respect is increased. I never did rate you for being too bad, but too good: and if, when you make up your week's account, you find but a fraction of vanity in the sum total, you will fall to repenting, and come forth on Monday as humble as —. Then, if I huff my heart out, you will only simper, and still wrap yourself up in your obstinate goodness.—Well! take your own way; I give you up to all your abominable virtues, and will go answer the rest of your letter.

I congratulate you on the demolition of the Bastile—I mean as you do, of its functions. For the poor soul itself, I had no ill will to it: on the contrary, it was a curious sample of ancient castellar dungeons, which the good folks the founders took for palaces:—yet I always hated to drive by it, knowing the miseries it contained. Of itself it did not gobble up prisoners to glut its maw, but received them by command. The destruction of it was silly, and agreeable to the ideas of a mob, who do not know stones and bars and bolts from a *lettre de cachet*. If the country remains free, the Bastile would be as tame as a ducking-stool, now that there is no such thing as a scold. If despotism recovers, the Bastile will rise from its ashes!—recover, I fear, it will. The *états* cannot remain a mob of kings, and will prefer a single one to a larger mob of kings and greater tyrants. The nobility, the clergy, and people of property will wait, till by address and money they can divide the people—or, whoever gets the larger or more victorious army into his hands, will be a Cromwell or a Monke. In short, a revolution procured by a national vertigo does not promise a crop of legislators. It is time that composes a good constitution: it formed ours. We were near losing it by the lax and unconditional restoration of Charles II. The revolution was temperate, and has lasted—and though it might have been improved, we know that with all its moderation it disgusted half the nation, who would have brought back the old fores.

I abominate the Inquisition as much as you do:—yet if the king of Spain receives no check like his cousin Louis, I fear he will not be disposed to relax any terrors. Every crowned head in Europe must ach at present; and the frantic and barbarous proceedings in France will not meliorate the stock of liberty, though for some time their majesties will be mighty tender of the rights of their subjects.

According to this hypothesis, I can administer some comfort to you about your poor negroes. I do not imagine that they will be emancipated at once—but their fate will be much alleviated, as the attempt will have alarmed their butchers enough to make them gentler, like the European monarchs, for fear of provoking the disinterested, who have no sugar plantations, to abolish the horrid traffic.

I do not understand the manœuvre of sugar, and, perhaps, am going to
talk

talk nonsense, as my idea may be impracticable—but I wish human wit, which is really very considerable in mechanics and merchantry, could devise some method of cultivating canes and making sugar without the manual labour of the human species. How many mills and inventions have there not been discovered to supply succedaneums to the work of the hands, and which before the discoveries would have been treated as visions! It is true, manual labour has sometimes taken it very ill to be excused, and has destroyed such mills—but the poor negroes would not rise and insist upon being worked to death. Pray talk to some ardent genius, but do not name me—not merely because I may have talked like an idiot, but because my ignorance might, ipso facto, stamp the idea with ridicule. People, I know, do not love to be put out of their old ways: no farmer listens at first to new inventions in agriculture; and I don't doubt but bread was originally deemed a new-fangled vagary by those who had seen their fathers live very comfortably upon acorns. Nor is there any harm in starting new game to invention: many excellent discoveries have been made by men who were *à la chasse* of something very different. I am not quite sure that the arts of making gold and of living for ever have been yet found out:—yet to how many noble discoveries has the pursuit of those nostrums given birth! Poor chymistry, had she not had such glorious objects in view!

If you are sitting under a cowslip at your cottage, these reveries may amuse you for half an hour, at least make you smile; and for the ease of your conscience, which is always in a panic, they require no answer.

I will not ask you about the new History of Bristol, because you are too good a citizen to say a word against your native place—but do pray cast your eye on the prints of the cathedral and castle, the chef-d'œuvres of Chatterton's ignorance, and of Mr. Barrett's too—and, on two letters pretended to have been sent to me, and which never were sent. If my incredulity had wavered, they would have fixed it. I wish the milk-woman would assert, that Boadicia's dairy-maid had invented Dutch tiles; it would be like Chatterton's origin of heraldry and painted glass, in those two letters.

I must, however, mention one word about myself. In the new fourth volume of the Biographia Britannica I am more candidly treated about that
poor

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poor lad than usual: yet the writer still affirms that, according to my own account, my reply was too much in the common-place style of court-replies. Now my own words, and the truth, as they stand in print in the very letter of mine which this author quotes, were, "*I wrote him a letter with as much kindness and tendernefs as if I had been his guardian.*" Is this by my own account a court-reply?—Nor did I conceive, for I never was a courtier, that courtiers are wont to make *tender* replies to the poor.—I am glad to hear they do.

I have kept this letter some days in my writing-box, till I could meet with a stray member of parliament—for it is not worth making you pay for: but when you talk to me I cannot help answering incontinently:—besides, can one take up a letter at a long distance, and heat one's reply over again with the same interest that it occasioned at first? Adieu! I wish you may come to Hampton before I leave these purlicues!

Yours *More and More*,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVI.

Strawberry-hill, Nov. 4, 1789.

I AM not surpris'd, my dear madam, that the notice of my illness should have stimulated your predominant quality, your sensibility. I cannot do less in return than relieve it immediately, by assuring you that I am in a manner recovered; and should have gone out before this time, if my mind were as much at ease as my poor limbs. I have passed five months most uncomfortably; the two last most unhappily. In June and September I had two bad falls by my own lameness and weakness, and was much bruised, while I was witness to the danger, and then to the death of my invaluable niece, lady Dyfart. She was angelic, and has left no children.—The unexpected death of lord Waldegrave, one of the most amiable of men, has not only deprived me of him, but has opened a dreadful scene of calamities! He and my niece were the happiest and most domestic of couples.

Your kind inquiries after me have drawn these details from me, for which I make no excuse: good nature never grudges its pity. I, who love to force

your

your gravity to smile, am seriously better pleased to indulge your benevolence with a subject of esteem, which, though moving your compassion, will be accompanied by no compunction. I will now answer your letter.

Your plea, that not composition, but business, has occasioned your silence, is no satisfaction to *me*. In my present anxious solitude I have again redde Bonner and Florio, and the Bas-bleu; and do you think I am pleased to learn that you have not been writing? Who is it says something like this line:—

Hannah will *not* write, and Laetilla *will*.

They who think her earl Goodwin will outgo Shakespeare, might be in the right if they specified in what way.—I believe she may write worse than he sometimes did, though that is not easy; but to excel him—Oh! I have not words adequate to my contempt for those who can suppose such a possibility!

I am sorry, very sorry for what you tell me of poor Barrett's fate. Though he did write worse than Shakespeare, it is great pity he was told so, as it killed him; and I rejoice that I did not publish a word in contradiction of the letters which he said Chatterton sent to me, as I was advised to do. I might have laughed at the poor man's folly, and then I should have been miserable to have added a grain to the poor man's mortification.

You rejoice *me*, not my vanity, by telling me my idea of a mechanic succedaneum to the labour of negroes is not visionary, but thought practicable. Oh! how I wish I understood sugar and ploughs, and could marry them!—Alas! I understand nothing useful. My head is as un-mechanic as it is un-arithmetic, un-geometric, un-metaphysic, un-commercial:—but will not some one of those superior heads to whom you have talked on my indigested hint reduce it to practicability? How a feasible scheme would stun those who call humanity romantic, and show from the books of the custom-house, that murder is a great improvement of the revenue! Even the present situation of France is favourable. Could not Mr. Wilberforce obtain to have the enfranchisement of the negroes started there? The
Jews

Jews are claiming their natural rights there; and blacks are certainly not so great defaulters as the Hebrews, though they too have undergone ample persecutions. Methinks, as lord George Gordon is in correspondence with the *états*, he has been a little remiss in not signing the petition of those of his new communion.

The *états* are detestable and despicable; and, in fact, guilty of the outrages of the Parisian and provincial mobs. The mob of 1200—not legislators, but—dissolvers of all laws unchained the mastiffs that had been tied up, and were sure to worry all who fell in their way. To annihilate all laws, however bad, and to have none ready to replace them, was proclaiming anarchy. What should one think of a mad doctor, who should let loose a lunatic, suffer him to burn Bedlam, chop off the heads of the keepers, and then consult with some students in physic on the gentlest mode of treating delirium? By a late vote I see that the 1200 praters are reduced to 500—*Vive la reine Billingsgate!* the Thalestris who has succeeded Louis quatorze. A committee of those Amazons stopped the duke of Orleans, who, to use their style, I believe is not *a barrel better herring*.

Your reflections on Vertot's passion for revolutions are admirable, and yet it is natural for an historian to like to describe times of action. Halcyon days do not furnish matter for talents; they are like the virtuous couple in a comedy, a little insipid. Mr. Manly and lady Grace, Mellefont and Cynthia, do not interest one much. Indeed, in a tragedy where they are unhappy, they give the audience full satisfaction—and no envy.

The newspapers, no doubt, thought doctor ——— could not do better than to espouse you. He certainly would be very judicious, could he obtain your consent—but, alas! you would soon squabble about Socinianism, or some of those *isms*. To tell you the truth, I hate all those Constantinopolitan jargons, that set people together by the ears about pedantic terms. When you apply scholastic phrases as happily and genteelly as you do in your Bas-bleu, they are delightful; but don't muddle your charming simplicity with controversial distinctions, that will sour your sweet piety. Sects are the bane of charity, and have deluged the world with blood.

I do

I do not mean, by what I am going to say, to extort another letter from you before I have the pleasure of seeing you at Hampton; but I really shall be much obliged to you for a single line soon, only to tell me if miss Williams is at Stoke with the duchess of Beaufort.

To a short note, cannot you add a short P. S. on the fate of earl Goodwin?

Lac mihi—novum non frigore deficit.

Adieu, my amiable friend!

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVII.

Berkeley-square, Feb. 20, 1790.

IT is very provoking that people must always be hanging or drowning themselves, or going mad, that you forsooth, mistress, may have the diversion of exercising your pity, and good nature, and charity, and intercession, and all that beadroll of virtues that make you so troublesome and amiable, when you might be ten times more agreeable by writing things that would not cost one above half-a-crown at a time. You are an absolutely walking hospital, and travel about into lone and by places with your doors open to house stray casualties! I wish at least that you would have some children yourself, that you might not be plaguing one for all the pretty brats that are starving and friendless. I suppose it was some such Goody two or three thousand years ago that suggested the idea of an alma-mater suckling the three hundred and sixty-five bantlings of the countess of Hainault.—Well, as your newly-adopted pensioners have *two* babes, I insist on your accepting *two* guineas for them instead of one at present (that is, when you shall be present).—If you cannot circumscribe your own charities, you shall not stint mine, madam, who can afford it much better, and who must be dunned for alms, and do not scramble over hedges and ditches in searching for opportunities of flinging away my money on good works. I employ mine better at *auctions, and in buying pictures and baubles, and hoarding curiosities*, that in

truth I cannot keep long, but that will last *for ever* in my catalogue, and make me immortal!—Alas! will they cover a multitude of sins?—Adieu! I cannot jest after *that* sentence.

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R XVIII.

Berkeley-square, Sept. 29, 1791.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE been very sorry, but not at all angry, at not hearing from you so long. With all your friendly and benevolent heart, I know by experience how little you love writing to your friends—and I know why: you think you lose moments which you could employ in doing more substantial good; and that your letters only pamper our minds, but do not feed or clothe our bodies: if they did, you would coin as much paper as the French do in assignats. Do not imagine now that you have committed a wicked thing by writing to me at last; comfort yourself, that your conscience, not temptation, forced you to write; and be assured I am as grateful as if you had written from choice, not from duty, your constant spiritual director.

I have been out of order the whole summer, but not very ill for above a fortnight. I caught a painful rheumatism by going into a very crowded church in a rainy day where all the windows were open, to hear our friend the bishop of London preach a charity sermon here at Twickenham. My gout would not resign to a new incumbent, but came too; and both together have so lamed my right arm, though I am now using it, that I cannot yet extend it entirely, nor lift it to the top of my head. However, I am free from pain; and as Providence, though it supplied us originally with so many bounties, took care we might shift with succedaneums on the loss of several of them, I am content with what remains of my stock; and since all my fingers are not useless, and that I have not six hairs left, I am not much grieved at not being able to comb my head. Nay, should not such a shadow as I have ever been, be thankful, that at the eve of seventy-five I am not yet passed away?

I am

I am so little out of charity with the bishop for having been the innocent cause of the death of my shoulder, that I am heartily concerned for him and her on Mrs. Porteus's accident¹. It may have marbled her complexion, but I am persuaded has not altered her lively, amiable, good-humoured countenance. As I know not where to direct to them, and as you cannot suppose it a sin for a sheep to write to its pastor on a week-day, I wish you would mark the interest I take in their accident and escape from worse mischief.

I thank you most cordially for your inquiry after *my* wives². I am in the utmost perplexity of mind about them; torn between hopes and fears. I believe them set out from Florence on their return since yesterday se'n-night, and consequently feel all the joy and impatience of expecting them in five or six weeks:—but then, besides fears of roads, bad inns, accidents, heats and colds, and the sea to cross in November at last; all my satisfaction is dashed by the uncertainty whether they come through Germany or France. I have advised, begged, implored, that it may not be through those Iroquois, Lestryons, Anthropophagi, the Franks; and then, hearing passports were abolished, and the roads more secure, I half consented, as they wished it, and the road is much shorter; and then I repented, and have contradicted myself again—And now I know not which route they will take! nor shall enjoy any comfort from the thoughts of their return, till they are returned safe.

'Tis well I am doubly guaranteed—or who knows, as I am as old almost as both her husbands together, but Mrs. B—— might have cast a longing eye towards me? How I laughed at hearing of her throwing a second muckender to a Methusalem! a fat red-faced veteran, with a portly hillock of flesh. I conclude all her grandfathers are dead; or, as there is no prohibition in the table of consanguinity against male ancestors, she would certainly have stepped backwards towards the deluge, and ransacked her pedigrees on both sides for some kinsman of the patriarchs. I could titter *à plusieurs reprises*; but I am too old to be improper, and you are too modest to be *impropered* to, and so I will drop the subject at the herald's office.

¹ An overturn in a carriage.

² The two miss Berrys, whom he thus called.

I am happy at and honour miss B——'s resolution in casting away golden, or rather guilt chains: others out of vanity would have worn them till they had eaten into the bone. On that charming young woman's chapter I agree with you perfectly—not a jot on *Deborah* ———, whom you admire: I have neither redde her verses nor will. As I have not your aspen conscience, I cannot forgive the heart of a woman that is party per pale blood and tenderness, that curses our clergy and feels for negroes. Can I forget the 14th of July, when they all contributed their faggot to the fires that her presbytyrants (as lord Melcombe called them) tried to light in every Smithfield in the island, and which, as P——e and P—— applauded in France, it would be folly to suppose they did not only wish but meant to kindle here? Were they ignorant of the atrocious barbarities, injustice, and violation of oaths committed in France? Did P—— not know that the clergy there had no option left but between starving and perjury? And what does he think of the poor man executed at Birmingham, who declared at his death he had been provoked by the infamous hand-bill?—I know not who wrote it.—No, my good friend: *Deborah* may cant rhymes of compassion, but she is a hypocrite; and you shall not make me read her, nor with all your sympathy and candour can you esteem her. Your compassion for the poor blacks is genuine, sincere from your soul, most amiable; hers, a measure of faction: her party supported the abolition, and regretted the disappointment as a blow to the good cause. I know this.—Do not let your piety lead you into the weakness of respecting the bad, only because they hoist the flag of religion, while they carry a stiletto in the flag-staff. Did not they, previous to the 14th of July, endeavour to corrupt the guards? What would have ensued, had they succeeded, you must tremble to think!

You tell me nothing of your own health—may I flatter myself it is good? I wish I knew so authentically! and I wish I could guess when I should see you, without your being staked to the fogs of the Thames at Christmas—I cannot desire that. Adieu, my very valuable friend! I am, though unworthy,

Yours most cordially,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

Berkeley-square, January 1, 1792.

MY MUCH-ESTEEMED FRIEND,

I HAVE not so long delayed answering your letter from the pitiful revenge of recollecting how long your pen is fetching breath before it replies to mine—Oh! no—You know I love to *heap coals of kindness* on your head, and to draw you into little sins, that you may forgive yourself, by knowing your time was employed on big virtues. On the contrary, you would be revenged; for here have you, according to *your* notions, inveigled me into the fracture of a commandment; for I am writing to you on a *Sunday*, being the first moment of leisure that I have had since I received your letter. It does not indeed clash with my religious ideas, as I hold paying one's debts as good a deed, as praying and reading sermons for a whole day in every week, when it is impossible to fix the attention to one course of thinking for so many hours for fifty-two days in every year.—Thus you see I can preach too—But seriously—and indeed I am little disposed to cheerfulness now—I am overwhelmed with troubles, and with business—and business that I do not understand—Law, and the management of a ruined estate, are subjects ill-suited to a head that never studied any thing that in wordly language is called useful. The tranquillity of my remnant of life will be lost, or so perpetually interrupted, that I expect little comfort—not that I am already intending to grow rich, but the moment one is supposed so, there are so many alert to turn one to their own account, that I have more letters to write to satisfy—or rather to dissatisfy them, than about my own affairs, though the latter are all confusion. I have such missives, on agriculture, pretensions to livings, offers of taking care of my game as I am incapable of it, self-recommendations of making my robes, and round hints of taking out my writ, that at least I may name a proxy, and give my dormant conscience to somebody or other! I trust you think better of my heart and understanding than to suppose that I have listened to any one of these new *friends*—Yet though I have negatived all, I have been forced to answer some of them before you; and that will convince you how cruelly ill I have passed my time lately, besides having been made ill with vexation and fatigue—But I am tolerably well again.

For

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For the other empty metamorphosis that has happened to the outward man¹, you do me justice in concluding that it can do nothing but tease me—it is being called names in one's old age. I had rather be my lord mayor, for then I should keep the nickname but a year, and mine I may retain a little longer—not that at seventy-five I reckon on becoming my lord Methusalem.

Vainer however I believe I am already become; for I have wasted almost two pages about myself, and said not a tittle about your health, which I most cordially rejoice to hear you are recovering, and as fervently hope you will entirely recover. I have the highest opinion of the element of water as a constant beverage, having so deep a conviction of the goodness and wisdom of Providence, that I am persuaded that when it indulged us in such a luxurious variety of eatables, and gave us but one drinkable, it intended that our sole liquid should be both wholesome and corrective.—Your system I know is different—You hold that mutton and water were the only cock and hen that were designed for our nourishment—but I am apt to doubt whether draughts of water for six weeks are capable of restoring health, though some are strongly impregnated with mineral and other particles—Yet you have staggered me: the Bath water, by your account, is like electricity compounded of contradictory qualities; the one attracts and repels; the other turns a shilling yellow, and whitens your jaundice. I shall hope to see you (when is that to be?) without alloy.

I must finish, wishing you three hundred and thirteen days of happiness for the new year that is arrived this morning: the fifty-two that you hold in commendam, I have no doubt will be rewarded as such good intentions deserve.

Adieu, my *too* good friend! My direction shall talk superciliously to the postman²; but do let me continue unchangeably

Your faithful and sincere

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ His accession to his title.

² He means franking his letter by his newly acquired title of earl of Orford. E.

LETTER XX.

Berkeley-square, February 9, 1793.

MY HOLY HANNAH,

WITH your innate and usual goodness and sense, you have done me justice by guessing exactly at the cause of my long silence. You have been apt to tell me that my letters diverted you—How then could I write, when it was impossible but to attrist you! when I could speak of nothing but unparalleled horrors! and but awaken your sensibility, if it slumbered for a moment! What mind could forget the tenth of August and the second of September—and that the black and bloody year 1792 has plunged its murderous dagger still deeper, and already made 1793 still more detestably memorable! though its victim has at last been rewarded for four years of torture by forcing from him every kind of proof of the most perfect character that ever sat on a throne. Were these, alas! themes for letters? Nay, am I not sure that *you* have been still more shocked by a crime that passes even the guilt of shedding the blood of poor Louis—to hear of atheism avowed, and the avowal tolerated by monsters calling themselves a National Assembly!—But I have no words that can reach the criminality of such *inferno-human* beings—but must compose a term that aims at conveying my idea of them—For the future it will be sufficient to call them *the French*—I hope no other nation will ever deserve to be confounded with them!

Indeed, my dear friend, I have another reason for wishing to burn my pen entirely: all my ideas are confounded and overturned—I do not know whether all I ever learnt in the seventy-first years of my seventy-five was not wrong and false: common sense, reasoning, calculation, conjecture from analogy and from history of past events, all, all have been baffled; nor am I sure that what used to be thought the result of experience and wisdom, was not a mass of mistakes—Have I not found, do I not find, that the invention of establishing metals as the *signs* of property was an useless discovery, or at least only useful till the art of making paper was found out? Nay, the latter is preferable to gold and silver. If the ores were adulterated and cried down, nobody would take them in exchange. Depreciate paper as much as you will, and it will still serve all the purposes of
barter.

barter. Tradesmen still keep shops, stock them with goods, and deliver their commodities for those coined rags——Poor Reason, where art thou?

To show you that memory and argument are of no value, at least with me, I thought a year or two that this paper-mint would soon blow up, because I remembered that when Mr. C—— F—— and one or two more youths of brilliant genius first came to light, and into vast debts at play, they imparted to the world an important secret which they had discovered—— It was, that nobody needed to want money, if they would pay enough for it. Accordingly they borrowed of Jews at vast usury: but as they had made but an incomplete calculation, the interest so soon exceeded the principal, that the system did not maintain its ground for above two or three years. Faro has proved a more substantial speculation.—But I miscarried in applying my remembrance to the assignats, which still maintain their ground against that long-decried, but as long-adored corruptor of virtue, gold—Alack! I do not hear that virtue has flourished more for the destruction of its old enemy!

Shall I add another truth? I have been so disgusted and fatigued by hearing of nothing but French massacres, &c. and found it so impossible to shift conversation to any other topic, that before I had been a month in town I wished miss G—— would revive, that people might have at least one other subject to interest the ears and tongues of the public.—But no wonder universal attention is engrossed by the present portentous scene! It seems to draw to a question, whether Europe or France is to be depopulated; whether civilization can be recovered, or the republic of Chaos can be supported by assassination. We have heard of the golden, silver, and iron ages—the brazen one existed, while the French were only predominately insolent.—What the present age will be denominated, I cannot guess. Though the paper age would be characteristic, it is not emphatic enough, nor specifies the enormous sins of the fiends that are the agents. I think it may be styled the diabolic age—The duke of Orleans has dethroned Satan, who since his fall has never instigated such crimes as Orleans has perpetrated.

Let me soften my tone a little, and harmonise your poor mind by sweeter accents. In this deluge of triumphant enormities, what traits of the sublime and beautiful may be gleaned! Did you hear of madame Elizabeth,

the king's sister? a saint like yourself. She doted on her brother, for she certainly knew his soul. In the tumult in July, hearing the populace and the poissardes had broken into the palace, she flew to the king, and by embracing him tried to shield his person. The populace took her for the queen, cried out, "*Voilà cette chienne, cette Autrichienne!*" and were proceeding to violence. Somebody, to save her, screamed, "*Ce n'est pas la reine, c'est—*" The princess said, "*Ah! mon Dieu! ne les detrompez pas.*"—If that was not the most sublime instance of perfect innocence, ready prepared for death, I know not where to find one.

Sublime indeed too was the sentence of good father Edgeworth, the king's confessor, who thinking his royal penitent a little dismayed just before the fatal stroke, cried out, "*Montez, digne fils de St. Louis! Le ciel vous est ouvert.*"—The holy martyr's countenance brightened up, and he submitted at once. Such victims, such confessors as those, and monsieur de Malesherbes, repair some of the breaches in human nature made by Orleans, Condorcet, Santerre, and a legion of evil spirits.

The tide of horrors has hurried me much too far, before I have not vented a note of my most sincere concern for your bad account of your health. I feel for it heartily, and wish your frame were as sound as your soul and understanding. What can I recommend? I am no physician but for my own flimsy texture, which by studying, and by contradicting all advice, I have drawn to this great age. Patience, temperance, nay, abstinence, are already yours—in short, you want to be corrected of nothing but too much piety, too much rigour towards yourself, and too much sensibility for others. Is not it possible to serve mankind, without feeling too great pity?—Perhaps I am a little too much hardened—I am grown too little alarmed for the health of my friends, from being become far more indifferent to life—I look to the nearness of my end, as a delivery from spectacles of woe. We have even amongst us monsters, more criminal, in speculation at least, than the French—They had cause to wish for correction of a bad government, though, till taught to dislike it, three-fourths of the country, I maintain, adored theirs. We have the perfectest ever yet devised—but if to your numerous readings of little pamphlets you would add one more, called *Village-politics*, infinitely superior to any thing on the

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subject, clearer, better stated, and comprehending the whole mass of matter in the shortest compass, you will be more mistress of the subject than any man in England. I know who wrote it, but will not tell you, because you did not tell me.

Your most faithful humble servant and friend,

ORFORD.

LETTER XXI.

Berkeley-square, March 23, 1793.

I SHALL certainly not leave off taunting your virtues, my excellent friend, for I find it sometimes makes you correct them. I scolded you for your modesty in not acquainting me with your *Village-politics* even after they were published; and you have already conquered that unfriendly delicacy, and announced another piece of which you are in labour. Still I see there wanted your ghostly father, the bishop of London, to enjoin you to be quite shameless and avow your natural child. I do approve his doctrine: calling it by your own name will make its fortune. If, like Rousseau, you had left your babe among the enfans trouvés, it might never be heard of more than his poor issue have been; for I can but observe that the French patriots, who have made such a fuss with his ashes, have not taken the smallest pains to attempt to discover his real progeny, which might not have been impossible by collating dates and circumstances.

I am proud of having imitated you at a great distance, and been persuaded, much against my will and practice, to let my name be put to the second subscription for the poor French clergy, as it was thought it might tend to animate that consumptive contribution.

I am impatient for your pamphlet, not only as being yours, but hoping it will invigorate horror against French atheism, which I am grieved to say did not by any means make due impression. I did very early apply to your
confessor,

confessor, to beg he would enjoin his clergy to denounce that shocking impiety—I could almost recommend to you to add a slight postscript on the massacre of that wretch *Manuel*. I do not love such insects, as we are, dispensing *judgments*—yet if the punishment of that just victim might startle such profane criminals, it might be charity to suggest the hint to them.

24th.

I was interrupted, and could not finish my letter in a breath, as I meant the moment I had received yours, from eagerness to thank you for the notice of your *publication*. I wish you had added the name of your man-midwife the printer; but I trust to seeing you stand in a black and white sheet, the newspaper. Mrs. Boscawen was so kind as to call on me the same day with the same information from your letter to her—but in hers were some words on the late bankruptcies, more than were in mine, that alarm us, and that, though not explicit, look as if you yourself have suffered by those failures. You have such a friendly and feeling heart, that it is impossible to discern whether any grief is not rather on account of others than on your own. Pray be confidential enough to tell me; for *I* have not such universal charity, as to lament the loss of others as I should yours.

I must modify the massacre of Manuel: he has been a good deal stabbed, but will, they say, recover. Perhaps it is better that some of those assassins should live to acknowledge, that “Do not to others what you would not have done to you” is not so silly a maxim, as most of the precepts of morality and justice have lately been deemed by *philosophers and legislators*—titles self-assumed by men, who have abolished all other titles; and who have disgraced and debased the former denomination, and under the latter have enjoined triple perjuries, and at last cannot fix on any code which should exact more forswearing. I own I am pleased that that ruffian pedant Condorcet’s new constitution was too clumsy and unwieldy to go down the throats of those who have swallowed every thing else. I did but just cast my eyes on the beginning and end, and was so lucky as to observe the hypocrite’s contradiction: he sets out with declaration of equality, and winds up with security of property. That is, we will plunder every body, and then entail the spoils on ourselves and our (*wrong*) heirs.

Well! that bloody chaos seems recoiling on themselves! It looks as if civil

war was bursting out in many provinces, and will precipitate approaching famine.—When, till *now*, could one make such a reflection without horror to one's self?—But, alas! have not the French brought it to the question, whether Europe or France should be laid desolate? Religion, morality, justice, have been stabbed, torn up by the roots: every right has been trampled under foot. Marriage has been profaned and undermined by law; and no wonder, that, amidst such excesses, the poor arts have shared in the common ruin!—And who have been the perpetrators of, or advocates for, such universal devastation? Philosophers, geometricians, astronomers—a Condorcet, a Baillie, a bishop of Autun, and a doctor——, and the last the worst. The French had seen grievances, crying grievances! yet not under the good late king. But what calamities or dangers threatened or had fallen on ——, but want of papal power, like his predecessor Calvin? If you say his house was burnt—but did he intend the fire should blaze on that side of the street? *Your* charity may believe him innocent—but your understanding does not. Well! I am glad to hear he is going to—I hope he will not bring back scalping, even to that national assembly of which he was proud of being elected a member! I doubt if Cartouche would have thought it an honour.

It was stuck up in Lloyd's coffee-house lately, that the duke of Orleans was named *Chef de la republique*. I thought it should be *Chef de la Lie publique*.

For the best and most comfortable part of your letter I have not thanked you yet, my dear friend; I mean the prospect of seeing you next month, and thank the zodiac, next month is very near. I must now for my own sake, as well as yours, hope that your health will continue to improve, as it is the condition of the bond—A pleasant word, that *continue*; it implies you have been mending.

Your postscript said you had been telling me a lie—So have I; for, on reading your letter again, I find you had named your *accoucheur* Cadell. I do not wonder he has been slow. I was told lately, that he has said that the public is so totally engrossed by politics (and many pieces of that sort I conclude come from his press), that the receipts of his shop, which used to be

TO MRS. H. MORE.

621

be fifteen thousand a year, have this year decreased two-thirds.—So the French par bricole have destroyed *our* literature too.

Adieu ! I long to see both you and your pamphlet, and am

Most cordially yours,

ORFORD.

L E T T E R XXII.

April 27, 1794.

THIS is no plot to draw you into committing even a good deed on a Sunday, which I suppose the *literality* of your conscience would haggle about, as if the day of the week constitutes the sin, and not the nature of the crime. But you may defer your answer, till to-night is become to-morrow by the clock having struck one; and then you may do an innocent thing without any guilt, which a quarter of an hour sooner you would think abominable.—Nay, as an Irishman would say, you need not even *read* this note till the canonical hour is past.

In short, my dear madam, I gave your obliging message to lady W——, who will be happy to see you on Tuesday, at one o'clock. But as her staircase is very bad, as she is in a lodging, I have proposed that this meeting, for which I have been pimping between two female faints, may be held here in my house, as I had the utmost difficulty last night in climbing her *scala santa*, and I cannot undertake it again. But if you are so good as to send me a favourable answer to-morrow, I will take care you shall find her here at the time I mentioned, with your true admirer,

ORFORD.

L E T T E R XXIII.

Berkeley-square, Saturday night, January 24, 1795.

MY BEST MADAM,

I WILL never more complain of your silence, for I am perfectly convinced that you have no idle, no unemployed moments. Your indefatigable
benevolence

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benevolence is incessantly occupied in good works ; and your head and your heart make the utmost use of the excellent qualities of both. You have given proofs of the talents of one, and you certainly do not wrap the still more precious talent of the other in a napkin. Thank you a thousand times for your most ingenious plan¹—may great success reward you !

I sent one instantly to the duchess of Gloucester, whose piety and zeal imitate yours at a distance ; but she says she cannot afford to subscribe just at this severe moment, when the poor so much want her assistance—but she will on the thaw, and should have been flattered by receiving a plan from yourself. I sent another to lord H——, who, I trust, will show it to a much greater lady ; and I repeated some of the facts you told me of the foul fiends, and their anti-*More* activity. I sent to Mr. White for half a dozen more of your plans, and will distribute them wherever I have hopes of their taking root and blossoming.—To-morrow I will send him my subscription² ; and I flatter myself you will not think it a breach of Sunday, nor will I make this long, that I may not widen that fracture.—Good night ! How calm and comfortable must your slumbers be on the pillow of every day's good deeds !

Monday.

Yesterday was dark as midnight.—Oh ! that it may be the darkest day in all respects that we shall see !—But these are themes too voluminous and dismal for a letter, and which your zeal tells me you feel too intensely for me to increase, when you are doing all in your power to counteract them.

One of my grievances is, that the sanguinary inhumanity of the times has almost poisoned one's compassion, and makes one abhor so many thousands of our own species, and rejoice when they suffer for their crimes. I could feel no pity on reading the account of the death of Condorcet (if true, though I doubt it). He was one of the greatest monsters exhibited by history ; and is said to have poisoned himself from famine and fear of the guillotine—and would be a new instance of what I suggested to you for a tract, to show, that though we must not assume a pretension to judging of divine judgments, yet we may believe that the œconomy of Providence has so disposed causes and

¹ The Cheap Repository for books, at this time set on foot: . . . dispersion of the works sold at the Cheap Repository.

² To the fund for promoting the printing and

consequences,

consequences, that such villains as Danton, Robespierre, the duke of Orleans, &c. &c. &c. do but dig pits for themselves.—I will check myself, or I shall wander into the sad events of the last five years—down to the rage of party that has sacrificed Holland! What a fund for reflection and prophetic apprehension! May we have as much wisdom and courage to stem our malevolent enemies, as it is plain, to our lasting honour, we have had charity to the French emigrants, and have bounty for the poor who are suffering in this dreadful season!

Adieu, thou excellent woman! thou reverse of that hyæna in petticoats, Mrs. ———, who to this day discharges her ink and gall on Marie Antoinette, whose unparalleled sufferings have not yet stanch'd that Alec'to's blazing ferocity. Adieu! adieu!

Yours from my heart,

ORFORD.

P. S. I have subscribed five guineas at Mr. White's to your plan.

LETTER XXIV.

Berkeley-square, February 13, 1795.

I RECEIVED your letter and packet of lays and virelays¹, and heartily wish they may fall in bad ground, and produce a hundred thousand fold, as I doubt is necessary. How I admire the activity of your zeal and perseverance! Should a new church ever be built, I hope in a side chapel there will be an altar dedicated to Saint Hannah, Virgin and Martyr; and that your pen, worn to the bone, will be inclosed in a golden reliquaire, and preserved on the shrine.

These few words I have been forced to dictate, having had the gout in my right hand above this fortnight; but I trust it is going off.

¹ Ballads, stories, tracts, &c. written by Mrs. H. More for the Cheap Repository.

The

624 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

The duchess¹ was much pleased with your writing to her, and ordered me to thank you. Your friend lady W—— is in town, and looks very well.

Adieu, best of women!

Yours most cordially,

ORFORD.

LETTER XXV.

Strawberry-hill, August 29, 1796.

YOU are not only the most beneficent, but the most benevolent of human beings. Not content with being a perfect saint yourself, which (forgive me for saying) does not always imply prodigious compassion for others; not satisfied with being the most disinterested, nay, the reverse of all patriots, for you sacrifice your very slender fortune, not to improve it, but to keep the poor honest instead of corrupting them; and you write politics as simply, intelligibly and unartfully, not as cunningly as you can to mislead.—Well, with all these giant virtues, you can find room and time in your heart and occupations for harbouring and exercising what those monkeys of pretensions, the French, invented and called *les petites morales*, which were to supply society with filigrain duties, in the room of all virtues, which they abolished on their road to the adoption of philosophy and atheism—Yes, though for ever busied in exercising services and charities for individuals, or for whole bodies of people, you do not leave a cranny empty into which you can slip a kindness. Your enquiry after me to miss B—— is so friendly, that I cannot trust solely to her thanking you for your letter, as I am sure she will, having sent it to her as she is bathing in the sea at Bognor rocks; but I must with infinite gratitude give you a brief account of myself—a very poor one indeed must I give. Condemned as a cripple to my couch for the rest of my days I doubt I am. Though perfectly healed, and even without a scar, my leg is so weakened that I have not recovered the least use of it, nor can move cross my chamber unless lifted up and held by two servants. This constitutes me totally a prisoner—But why should not I be so? What bu-

¹ Her royal highness the duchess of Gloucester.

ness

finest had I to live to the brink of seventy-nine? And why should one litter the world at that age? Then I thank God, I have vast blessings; I have preserved my eyes, ears and teeth; I have no pain left; and I would bet with any dormouse that it cannot outsleep me—And when one can afford to pay for every relief, comfort or assistance, that can be procured at fourscore, dares one complain? Must not one reflect on the thousands of old poor, who are suffering martyrdom, and have none of those alleviations?—O my good friend, I must consider myself as at my best; for, if I drag on a little longer, can I expect to remain even so tolerably?—Nay, does the world present a pleasing scene? Are not the devils escaped out of the swine, and overrunning the earth headlong? What a theme for meditation, that the excellent humane Louis seize should have been prevented from saving himself by that monster Drouet, and that that execrable wretch should be saved even by those, some of whom one may suppose he meditated to massacre; for at what does a Frenchman stop?—But I will quit this shocking subject, and for another reason too: I omitted one of my losses, almost the use of my fingers: they are so lame that I cannot write a dozen lines legibly, but am forced to have recourse to my secretary.—I will only reply by a word or two to a question you seem to ask; how I like ———? I do not care to say how little.—Alas! she has reversed experience, which I have long thought reverses its own utility by coming at the wrong end of our life when we do not want it. This author knew the world and penetrated characters before she had stepped over the threshold; and now she has seen so much of it she has little or no insight at all—perhaps she apprehended having seen too much—and kept the bags of foul air that she brought from the Cave of Tempests too closely tied.

Adieu, thou who mightest be one of the cleverest of women if thou didst not prefer being *one* of the best! And when I say *one* of the best, I have not engaged my vote for the second.

Yours most gratefully,

ORFORD.

ORFORD.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.

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MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.

TO THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

LETTER I.

A Ferney près de Geneve,
6 Juin, 1768.

MONSIEUR,

J'APPRENDS dans ma retraite que vous avez fait un excellent ouvrage sur le pirrhonisme de l'histoire; et que vous avez répandu une grande lumière sur l'obscurité qui couvre encor les temps des roses blanche et rouge, toutes deux sanglantes et fanées.

Il y a cinquante ans que j'ai fait voeu de douter. J'ose vous supplier, monsieur, de m'aider à accomplir mon voeu. Je vous suis peut-être inconnu, quoique j'aie été honoré autrefois de l'amitié *of the two brothers*.

Je n'ai d'autre recommandation auprès de vous que l'envie de m'instruire. Voyez si elle suffit. Voulez vous avoir la bonté de m'envoyer votre ouvrage par la poste sous l'enveloppe de M. le chef du bureau des interprètes à Versailles? Ma témérité va plus loin encor, monsieur: j'ai toujours douté de l'assassinat de M. de Genonville qui a produit en France plus de mauvais vers que de représailles. Je vois que dans aucune piece juridique, dans aucun manifeste, dans aucun écrit des ministres respectifs, il n'est question de cet assassinat prétendu. Si cependant il est vrai que vos soldats aient commis cette barbarie sauvage ou chrétienne en Canada, je vous prie de me l'avouer: S'ils n'en font pas coupables, je vous prie de les justifier par un mot de votre main. Tout ce que la renommée m'apprend de vous, me persuade que vous pardonnerez à toutes les libertés que je prends.

Vous pardonnerez encor plus à mon ignorance de vos titres; je n'en

* Sir Robert Walpole and his brother Horace.

respecte pas moins votre personne. Je connais plus votre mérite que les dignités dont il doit être revêtu.

J suis avec l'esti me la plus respectueuse, monsieur,

Votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

VOLTAIRE.

LETTER II.

TO MONSIEUR DE VOLTAIRE.

Strawberry-hill, June 21, 1768.

SIR,

YOU read English with so much more facility than I can write French, that I hope you will excuse my making use of my own tongue to thank you for the honour of your letter. If I employed your language, my ignorance in it might betray me into expressions that would not do justice to the sentiments I feel at being so distinguished.

It is true, sir, I have ventured to contest the history of Richard the third, as it has been delivered down to us: and I shall obey your commands, and send it to you, though with fear and trembling; for though I have given it to the world, as it is called, yet, as you have justly observed, *that* world is comprised within a very small circle of readers—and undoubtedly I could not expect that you would do me the honour of being one of the number. Nor do I fear you, sir, only as the first genius in Europe, who have illustrated every science; I have a more intimate dependence on you than you suspect. Without knowing it, you have been my master, and perhaps the sole merit that may be found in my writings is owing to my having studied yours: so far, sir, am I from living in that state of barbarism and ignorance with which you tax me when you say *que vous m'êtes peut-être inconnu*. I was not a stranger to your reputation very many years ago, but remember to have then thought you honoured our house by dining with my mother—though I was at school, and had not the happiness of seeing you: and yet my father was in a situation that might have dazzled eyes older than mine. The plain name of that father, and the pride of having had so excellent a father,

father, to whose virtues truth at last does justice, is all I have to boast. I am a very private man, distinguished by neither dignities nor titles, which I have never done any thing to deserve—but as I am certain that titles alone would not have procured me the honour of your notice, I am content without them.

But, sir, if I can tell you nothing good of myself, I can at least tell you something bad : and after the obligation you have conferred on me by your letter, I should blush if you heard it from any body but myself. I had rather incur your indignation than deceive you. Some time ago I took the liberty to find fault in print with the criticisms you had made on our Shakespeare. This freedom, and no wonder, never came to your knowledge. It was in a preface to a trifling Romance, much unworthy of your regard, but which I shall send you, because I cannot accept even the honour of your correspondence, without making you judge whether I deserve it. I might retract, I might beg your pardon ; but having said nothing but what I thought, nothing illiberal or unbecoming a gentleman, it would be treating you with ingratitude and impertinence, to suppose that you would either be offended with my remarks, or pleased with my recantation. You are as much above wanting flattery, as I am above offering it to you. You would despise me, and I should despise myself—a sacrifice I cannot make, sir, even to you.

Though it is impossible not to know *you*, sir, I must confess my ignorance on the other part of your letter. I know nothing of the history of monsieur de Genonville, nor can tell whether it is true or false, as this is the first time I ever heard of it. But I will take care to inform myself as well as I can, and, if you allow me to trouble you again, will send you the exact account as far as I can obtain it. I love my country, but I do not love any of my countrymen that have been capable, if they have been so, of a foul assassination. I should have made this inquiry directly, and informed you of the result of it in this letter, had I been in London ; but the respect I owe you, sir, and my impatience to thank you for so unexpected a mark of your favour, made me choose not to delay my gratitude for a single post. I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obliged and most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER III.

Au Chateau de Ferney, Pais de Gex par Verfoi et Lyon,
15 Juillet, 1768.

MONSIEUR,

IL y a quarante ans que je n'ose plus parler Anglais, et vous parlez nôtre langue très bien. J'ai vu des lettres de vous écrites comme vous pensez. D'ailleurs, mon age et mes maladies ne me permettent pas d'écrire de ma main. Vous aurez donc mes remerciements dans ma langue.

Je viens de lire la préface de vôtre Histoire de Richard trois ; elle me paraît trop courte. Quand on a si visiblement raison, et qu'on joint à ses connaissances une philosophie si ferme, et un stile si mâle, je voudrais qu'on me parlât plus longtemps. Vôtre père était un grand ministre et un bon orateur, mais je doute qu'il eût pu écrire comme vous. Vous ne devez pas dire, *quia pater major me est*.

J'ai toujours pensé comme vous qu'il faut se défier de toutes les histoires anciennes. Fontenelle, le seul homme du siècle de Louis XIV qui fut à la fois poète, philosophe et savant, disait qu'elles étaient des *fables convenues*. Et il faut avouer que Rolin a trop compilé de chimères et de contradictions.

Après avoir lu la préface de vôtre Histoire j'ai lu celle de vôtre Roman. Vous vous y moquez un peu de moi. Les Français entendent raillerie, mais je vais vous répondre sérieusement.

Vous avez fait accroire à vôtre nation, que je méprise Shakespear. Je suis le premier qui ait fait connaître Shakespear aux Français ; j'en ai traduit des passages il y a quarante ans, ainsi que de Milton, de Waller, de Rochester, de Driden, et de Pope. Je peux vous assurer qu'avant moi presque personne en France ne connaissait la poésie Anglaise. A peine avait-on même entendu parler de Loke. J'ai été persécuté pendant trente ans par une nuée de fanatiques pour avoir dit que Loke est l'Hercule de la métaphysique qui a posé les bornes de l'esprit humain.

Ma destinée a encor voulu que je fusse le premier qui ait expliqué à
mes

mes concitoyens les découvertes du grand Neuton, que quelques fots parmi nous appellent encor des sistêmes. J'ai été vôtre apôtre et vôtre martyr. En vérité il n'est pas juste que les Anglais se plaignent de moi.

J'avais dit il y a très longtems que si Shakespear était venu dans le siecle d'Adisson il aurait joint à son génie l'élégance et la pureté qui rendent Adisson recommandable. J'avais dit, *que son génie était à lui, et que ses fautes étaient à son siecle.* Il est précisément, à mon avis, comme le Lopez de Vega des Espagnols, et comme le Caldéron. C'est une belle nature, mais sauvage, nulle régularité, nulle bienséance, nul art ; de la bassesse avec de la grandeur, de la boufonerie avec du terrible ; c'est le cahos de la tragédie dans lequel il y a cent traits de lumiere. Les Italiens, qui restaurèrent la tragédie un siecle avant les Anglais et les Espagnols, ne sont point tombés dans ce défaut ; ils ont mieux imité les Grecs ; il n'y a point de boufons dans l'*Œdipe* et dans l'*Electre* de Sophocle. Je soupçonne fort que cette grossiereté eut son origine dans nos fous de cour. Nous étions un peu barbares tous tant que nous sommes en deça des alpes. Chaque prince avait son fou en titre d'office. Des rois ignorants élevés par des ignorants ne pouvaient connaître les plaisirs nobles de l'esprit ; ils dégradèrent la nature humaine au point de paier des gens pour leur dire des sottises. De là vint nôtre *mère folle* ; et avant Moliere il y avait un fou de cour dans presque toutes les comédies. Cette méthode est abominable.

J'ai dit, il est vrai, monsieur, ainsi que vous le raportez, qu'il y a des comédies sérieuses, telles que le *Misanthrope*, qui sont des chef-d'œuvres ; qu'il y en a de très plaisantes, comme *George Dandin* ; que la plaisanterie, le sérieux, l'attendrissement peuvent très bien s'accorder dans la même comédie.

J'ai dit que tous les genres sont bons hors le genre ennuyeux. Oui, monsieur, mais la grossiereté n'est point un genre. Il y a beaucoup de logements dans la maison de mon père ; mais je n'ai jamais prétendu qu'il fut honnête de loger dans la même chambre *Charle quint* et *don Japhet d'Arménie*, *Auguste* et un matelot yvre, *Marc-Aurèle* et un boufon des rues. Il me semble qu'*Horace* pensait ainsi dans le plus beau des siecles ; consultez son *Art Poétique*. Toute l'Europe éclairée pense de même aujourd'hui, et les Espagnols commencent à se défaire à la fois du mauvais goût comme de l'*Inquisition*, car le bon esprit proscriit également l'un et l'autre.

Vous fentez si bien, monsieur, à quel point le trivial et le bas défigurent la tragédie, que vous reprochez à Racine de faire dire à Antiochus dans Bérénice,

De son appartement cette porte est prochaine,
Et cet autre conduit dans celui de la reine.

Ce ne sont pas là certainement des vers héroïques. Mais ayez la bonté d'observer qu'ils sont dans une scène d'exposition, laquelle doit être simple. Ce n'est pas là une beauté de poésie, mais c'est une beauté d'exactitude, qui fixe le lieu de la scène, qui met tout d'un coup le spectateur au fait, et qui l'avertit que tous les personnages paraîtront dans ce cabinet qui est commun aux autres appartements, sans quoi il ne ferait point du tout vraisemblable que Titus, Bérénice et Antiochus parlaient toujours dans la même chambre

Que le lieu de la scène y soit fixe et marqué,

dit le sage Despreaux, l'oracle du bon goût, dans son Art Poétique, égal pour le moins à celui d'Horace. Notre excellent Racine n'a presque jamais manqué à cette règle. Et c'est une chose digne d'admiration qu'Athalie paraisse dans le temple des Juifs, et dans la même place où l'on a vu le grand prêtre, sans choquer en rien la vraisemblance.

Vous pardonnerez encor plus, monsieur, à l'illustre Racine, quand vous vous souviendrez que la pièce de Bérénice était en quelque façon l'histoire de Louis XIV. et de votre princesse Anglaise sœur de Charles second. Ils logeaient tous deux de plein pied à St. Germain, et un salon séparait leurs appartements.

Vous n'observez vous autres libres Bretons, ni unité de lieu, ni unité de tems, ni unité d'action. En vérité vous n'en faites pas mieux ; la vraisemblance doit être comptée pour quelque chose. L'art en devient plus difficile, et les difficultés vaincues donnent en tout genre du plaisir et de la gloire.

Permettez moi, monsieur, tout Anglais que vous êtes, de prendre un peu
le

le parti de ma nation. Je lui ai dit si souvent ses vérités, qu'il est bien juste que je la caresse quand je crois qu'elle a raison. Ouï, monsieur, j'ai cru, je crois, et je croirai que Paris est très supérieur à Athène en fait de tragédies et de comédies. Moliere et même Regnard me paraissent l'emporter sur Aristophane, autant que Démosthène l'emporte sur nos avocats. Je vous dirai hardiment que toutes les tragédies Grecques me paraissent des ouvrages d'écoliers en comparaison des sublimes scènes de Corneille, et des parfaites tragédies de Racine. C'était ainsi que parlait Boileau lui-même, tout admirateur des anciens qu'il était. Il n'a fait nulle difficulté d'écrire au bas du portrait de Racine, que ce grand homme avait surpassé Euripide et balancé Corneille.

Ouï, je crois démontré qu'il y a beaucoup plus d'hommes de goût à Paris que dans Athène, parce qu'il y a plus de trente mille âmes à Paris uniquement occupées des beaux arts, et qu'Athène n'en avait pas dix mille ; parce que le bas peuple d'Athène entraînait au spectacle et qu'il n'y entre point chez nous ; parce que ceux qui parmi nous jugent des beaux arts n'ont guères que cette occupation ; parce que notre commerce continuel avec les femmes a mis dans nos sentiments beaucoup plus de délicatesse, plus de bienveillance dans nos mœurs, et plus de finesse dans notre goût. Laissez nous notre théâtre ; laissez aux Italiens leurs *favole boscarecie*. Vous êtes assez riches d'ailleurs.

De très mauvaises pièces, il est vrai, ridiculement intriguées, barbalement écrites, ont pendant quelque tems à Paris des succès prodigieux, soutenus par la cabale, l'esprit de parti, la mode, la protection passagère de quelques personnes accréditées ; mais en très peu d'années l'illusion se dissipe, les cabales passent, et la vérité reste.

Permettez moi de vous dire encor un mot sur la rime que vous nous reprochez. Presque toutes les pièces de Dryden sont rimées. C'est une difficulté de plus. Les vers qu'on retient de lui, et que tout le monde cite, sont rimés. Et je soutiens encore que Cinna, Athalie, Iphigénie étant rimés, quiconque voudrait secouer ce joug en France serait regardé comme un artiste faible qui n'aurait pas la force de le porter.

En qualité de vieillard, il faut que je vous dise une anecdote. Je demandais

un jour à Pope pourquoi Milton n'avait pas rimé son poëme, dans le tems que les autres poëtes rimaient leurs poëmes à l'imitation des Italiens; il me répondit, *because he could not.*

Je vous ai dit, monsieur, tout ce que j'avais sur le cœur. J'avoue que j'ai fait une grosse faute en ne faisant pas attention que le comte de Leischester s'était d'abord appelé Dudley; mais si vous avez la fantaisie d'entrer dans la chambre des pairs et de changer de nom, je me souviendrai toujours du nom de Walpole avec l'estime la plus respectueuse.

Avant le départ de ma lettre j'ai eu le tems, monsieur, de lire votre Richard trois. Vous seriez un excellent attorney general; vous pesez toutes les probabilités; mais il paraît que vous avez une inclination secrète pour ce bossu. Vous voulez qu'il ait été beau garçon, et même galant homme. Le bénédictin Calmet a fait une dissertation pour prouver que Jesus Christ avait un fort beau visage. Je veux croire avec vous que Richard trois n'était ni si laid, ni si méchant qu'on le dit; mais je n'aurais pas voulu avoir à faire à lui. Votre rose blanche et votre rose rouge avaient de terribles épines pour la nation.

Those gracious kings are all a pack of rogues.

En lisant l'histoire des York et des Lancastre, et de bien d'autres, on croit lire l'histoire des voleurs de grand chemin. Pour votre Henri sept, il n'était que coupeur de bourses.

Be a minister or an anti-minister, a lord or a philosopher; I wil be with an equal respect, sir,

Your most humble obedient servant,

VOLTAIRE.

Be so kind as to tell me frankley if Jumonville was assassinated near the river call'd Ohio.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

Strawberry-hill, July 27, 1768.

ONE can never, sir, be sorry to have been in the wrong, when one's errors are pointed out to one in so obliging and masterly a manner. Whatever opinion I may have of Shakespeare, I should think him to blame, if he could have seen the letter you have done me the honour to write to me, and yet not conform to the rules you have there laid down. When he lived, there had not been a Voltaire both to give laws to the stage, and to show on what good sense those laws were founded. Your art, sir, goes still farther; for you have supported your arguments, without having recourse to the best authority, your own works. It was my interest perhaps to defend barbarism and irregularity. A great genius is in the right, on the contrary, to show that when correctness, nay when perfection is demanded, he can still shine, and be himself, whatever fetters are imposed on him. But I will say no more on this head; for I am neither so unpolished as to tell you to your face how much I admire you, nor, though I have taken the liberty to vindicate Shakespeare against your criticisms, am I vain enough to think myself an adversary worthy of you. I am much more proud of receiving laws from you, than of contesting them. It was bold in me to dispute with you even before I had the honour of your acquaintance; it would be ungrateful now when you have not only taken notice of me, but forgiven me. The admirable letter you have been so good as to send me, is a proof that you are one of those truly great and rare men, who know at once how to conquer and to pardon.

I have made all the enquiry I could into the story of M. de Jumonville; and though your and our accounts disagree, I own I do not think, sir, that the strongest evidence is in our favour. I am told we allow he was killed by a party of our men, going to the Ohio. Your countrymen say he was going with a flag of truce. The commanding officer of our party said M. de Jumonville was going with hostile intentions; and that very hostile orders were found after his death in his pocket. Unless that officer had proved that he had previous intelligence of those orders, I doubt he will not be justified by finding them afterwards; for I am not at all disposed to believe that he had the foreknowledge of your hermit, who pitched the old woman's nephew.

phew into the river, because *ce jeune homme auroit assassiné sa tante dans un an.*

I am grieved that such disputes should ever subsist between two nations who have every thing in themselves to create happiness, and who may find enough in each other to love and admire. It is your benevolence, sir, and your zeal for softening the manners of mankind; it is the doctrine of peace and amity which you preach, that have raised my esteem for you even more than the brightness of your genius. France may claim you in the latter light, but all nations have a right to call you their countryman du côté du cœur. It is on the strength of that connection that I beg you, sir, to accept the homage of,

Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* Into what despicable duplicity can inordinate vanity betray even real genius!—While Voltaire was writing in this flattering manner to Mr. Walpole, was asking for his works, and was courting his correspondence, he enclosed the above letter in the following to the duchess of Choiseul, in which he takes no sort of notice of his having begun the correspondence, but seems to wish it to be understood, that both Mr. Walpole's works and his difference in opinion with Voltaire had been officiously offered to his notice by their author himself. The duchess of Choiseul showed this letter to Mr. Walpole; which gave him such a contempt for Voltaire's dissimulation, that he dropped all farther correspondence with him. E.

VOLTAIRE to the DUCHESS of CHOISEUL.

15 Juillet, 1768.

MADAME,

La femme du protecteur est protectrice. La femme du ministre de la France pourra prendre

le parti des François contre les Anglois avec qui je suis en guerre. Daignez juger, madame, entre M. Walpole et moi. Il m'a envoyé ses ouvrages dans lesquels il justifie le tiran Richard trois, dont ni vous ni moi ne nous soucions gueres. Mais il donne la préférence à son grossier bouffon Shakespeare sur Racine et sur Corneille; et c'est de quoi je me soucie beaucoup.

Je ne fais par quelle voie Mr. Walpole m'a envoyé sa déclaration de guerre. Il faut que ce soit par monsieur le duc de Choiseul, car elle est très spirituelle et très polie. Si vous voulez, madame, être médiatrice de la paix, il ne tient qu'à vous; j'en passerai par ce que vous ordonnerez; je vous supplie d'être juge du combat. Je prends la liberté de vous envoyer ma réponse. Si vous la trouvez raisonnable, permettez que je prenne encore une autre liberté: c'est de vous supplier de lui faire parvenir ma lettre, soit par la poste, soit par M. le comte du Chatelet.

Vous me trouverez bien hardi, mais vous pardonnerez à un vieux soldat qui combat pour sa patrie,

LETTER V.

To GEORGE MONTAGU, Esq.

Huntingdon, May 30, 1763.

AS you interest yourself about Kimbolton, I begin my journal of two days here. But I must set out with owning, that I believe I am the first man that ever went sixty miles to an auction. As I came for ebony, I have been up to my chin in ebony; there is literally nothing but ebony in the house; all the other goods, if there were any, and I trust my lady Conyers did not sleep upon ebony mattresses, are taken away. There are two tables and eighteen chairs*, all made by the Hallet of two hundred years ago. These I intend to have; for mind, the auction does not begin till Thursday. There are more plebeian chairs of the same materials, but I have left commission for only the true black blood. Thence I went to Kimbolton, and asked to see the house. A kind footman, who in his zeal to open the chaise pinched half my finger off, said he would call the housekeeper: but a groom of the chambers insisted on my visiting their graces; and as I vowed I did not know them, he said they were in the great apartment, that all the rest was in disorder and altering, and would let me see nothing.—This was the reward of my first lie. I returned to my inn or alehouse, and instantly received a message from the duke to invite me to the castle. I was quite undressed, and dirty with my journey, and unacquainted with the duchess—yet was forced to go—Thank the god of dust, his grace was dirtier than me. He was extremely civil, and detected me to the groom of the chambers—asked me if I had dined. I said yes—lie the second. He pressed me to take a bed there. I hate to be criticised at a formal supper by a circle of stranger-footmen, and protested I was to meet a gentleman at Huntingdon to-night. The duchess and lady Caroline came in from walking; and to disguise my not having dined, for it was past six, I drank tea with them. The duchess is

patric, et qui, s'il a du goût, aura combattu sous vos ordres.

Agreez, madame, la sincère estime, la reconnaissance, et le profond respect du

VIEILLARD DES ALPES.

* Those now at Strawberry-hill. They are so elaborately carved, that an upholsterer in London asked Mr. Walpole 11 guineas to execute one similar in the same materials. E.

much

much altered, and has a bad short cough. I pity Catherine of Arragon for living at Kimbolton: I never saw an uglier spot. The fronts are not so bad as I expected, by not being so French as I expected, but have no pretensions to beauty, nor even to comely ancient ugliness. The great apartment is truly noble, and almost all the portraits good, of what I saw; for many are not hung up, and half of those that are, my lord duke does not know. The earl of Warwick is delightful; the lady Mandeville attiring herself in her wedding garb, delicious. The Prometheus is a glorious picture, the eagle as fine as my statue. Is not it by Vandyck? The duke told me that Mr. Spence found out it was by Titian—but critics in poetry I see are none in painting. This was all I was shown, for I was not even carried into the chapel. The walls round the house are levelling, and I saw nothing without doors that tempted me to taste. So I made my bow, hurried to my inn, snapped up my dinner, lest I should again be detected, and came hither, where I am writing by a great fire, and give up my friend the east wind, which I have long been partial to for the south-east's sake, and in contradiction to the west, for blowing perpetually and bending all one's plantations. To-morrow I see Hinchinbrook—and London. Memento, I promised the duke that you should come and write on all his portraits. Do, as you honour the blood of Montagu! Who is the man in the picture with sir Charles Goring, where a page is tying the latter's scarf? And who are the ladies in the double half-lengths?

Arlington-street, May 31.

WELL! I saw Hinchinbrook this morning. Considering it is in Huntingdonshire, the situation is not so ugly nor melancholy as I expected; but I do not conceive what provoked so many of your ancestors to pitch their tents in that triste country, unless the Capulets^{*} loved fine prospects. The house of Hinchinbrook is most comfortable, and just what I like; old, spacious, irregular, yet not vast or forlorn. I believe much has been done since you saw it—it now only wants an apartment, for in no part of it are there above two chambers together. The furniture has much simplicity, not to say too much; some portraits tolerable, none I think fine. When this lord gave Blackwood the head of the admiral[†] that I have now, he left

^{*} As opposing in every thing the Montagus.

[†] Admiral Montagu, earl of Sandwich, by sir P. Lely, now in the gallery at Strawberry-hill.

himself

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himself not one so good. The head he kept is very bad: the whole length is fine, except the face of it. There is another of the duke of Cumberland by Reynolds, the colours of which are as much changed as the original is to the proprietor. The garden is wondrous small, the park almost smaller, and no appearance of territory. The whole has a quiet decency that seems adapted to the admiral after his retirement, or to Cromwell before his exaltation. I returned time enough for the opera; observing all the way I came the proof of the duration of this east wind, for on the west side the blossoms were so covered with dust one could not distinguish them; on the eastern hand the hedges were white in all the pride of May. Good-night.

but

Wednesday, June 1.

My letter is a perfect diary. There has been a sad alarm in the kingdom of white fatin and muslin. The duke of Richmond was seized last night with a sore throat and fever; and though he is much better to-day, the masquerade^a of to-morrow night is put off till Monday. Many a queen of Scots, from sixty to sixteen, has been ready to die of the fright. Adieu once more! I think I can have nothing more to say before the post goes out to-morrow.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

^a The masked ball given by the duke of Richmond at his house in Privy-garden.

LETTER VI.

To MONSIEUR ELIE DE BEAUMONT.

[With the Castle of Otranto.]

Strawberry-hill, March 18, 1765.

SIR,

WHEN I had the honour of seeing you here, I believe I told you that I had written a novel, in which I was flattered to find that I had touched an effusion of the heart in a manner similar to a passage in the charming letters of the marquis de Roselle¹. I have since that time published my little story, but was so diffident of its merit, that I gave it as a translation from the Italian. Still I should not have ventured to offer it to so great a mistress of the passions as madame de Beaumont, if the approbation of London, that is, of a country to which she and you, sir, are so good as to be partial, had not encouraged me to send it to you. After I have talked of the passions, and the natural effusions of the heart, how will you be surprised to find a narrative of the most improbable and absurd adventures! How will you be amazed to hear that a country of whose good sense you have an opinion should have applauded so wild a tale! But you must remember, sir, that whatever good sense we have, we are not yet in any light chained down to precepts and inviolable laws. All that Aristotle or his superior commentators, your authors, have taught us, has not yet subdued us to regularity: we still prefer the extravagant beauties of Shakespeare and Milton to the cold and well-disciplined merit of Addison, and even to the sober and correct march of Pope. Nay, it was but t'other day that we were transported to hear Churchill rave in numbers less chastised than Dryden's, but still in numbers like Dryden's. You will not, I hope, think I apply these mighty names to my own case with any vanity, when it is only their enormities that I quote, and that in defence, not of myself, but of my countrymen, who have had good-humour enough to approve the visionary scenes and actors in the Castle of Otranto.

To tell you the truth, it was not so much my intention to recall the ex-

¹ A French novel written by madame de Beaumont, wife of this Elie de Beaumont.

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ploded marvels of ancient romance, as to blend the wonderful of old stories with the natural of modern novels. The world is apt to wear out any plan whatever; and if the marquis de Roselle had not appeared, I should have been inclined to say, that that species *had* been exhausted. Madame de Beaumont must forgive me if I add that Richardson had, to me at least, made that kind of writing insupportable. I thought the *nodus* was become *dignus vindice*, and that a god, at least a ghost, was absolutely necessary to frighten us out of too much senses. When I had so wicked a design, no wonder if the execution was answerable. If I make you laugh, for I cannot flatter myself that I shall make you cry, I shall be content; at least I shall be satisfied, till I have the pleasure of seeing you, with putting you in mind of, sir,

Your most devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. The passage I alluded to in the beginning of my letter is where Matilda owns her passion to Hippolita.—I mention it, as I fear so unequal a similitude would not strike madame de Beaumont.

LETTER VII.

TO THOMAS BRAND, ESQ. OF THE HOO IN HEREFORDSHIRE.

Paris, October 19, 1765.

DON'T think I have forgot your commissions: I mentioned them to old Mariette this evening, who says he has got one of them, but never could meet with the other, and that it will be impossible for me to find either at Paris. You know, I suppose, that he would as soon part with an eye as with any thing in his own collection.

You may, if you please, suppose me extremely diverted here. Oh! exceedingly. In the first place, I have seen nothing; in the second, I have been confined this fortnight with a return of the gout in both feet; and in

the third, I have not laughed since my lady Hertford went away. I assure you, you may come hither very safely, and be in no danger from mirth. Laughing is as much out of fashion as pantins or bilboquets. Good folks, they have not time to laugh. There is God and the king to be pulled down first; and men and women, one and all, are devoutly employed in the demolition. They think me quite profane, for having any belief left. But this is not my only crime: I have told them, and am undone by it, that they have taken from us to admire the two dullest things we had, whisky and Richardson—It is very true, and they want nothing but George Grenville to make their conversations, or rather dissertations, the most tiresome upon earth. For lord L——, if he would come hither, and turn free-thinker once more, he would be reckoned the most agreeable man in France—next to Mr. Hume, who is the only thing in the world that they believe implicitly; which they must do, for I defy them to understand any language that he speaks.

If I could divest myself of my wicked and *unphilosophic* bent to laughing, I should do very well. They are very civil and obliging to me, and several of the women are very agreeable, and some of the men. The duc de Nivernois has been beyond measure kind to me, and scarce missed a day without coming to see me during my confinement. The Guerchys are, as usual, all friendship. I had given entirely into supping, as I do not love rising early, and still less meat breakfasts. The misfortune is, that in several houses they dine, and in others sup.

You will think it odd that I should want to laugh, when Wilkes, Sterne, and Foote are here; but the first does not make me laugh, the second never could, and for the third, I choose to pay five shillings when I have a mind he should divert me. Besides, I certainly did not come in search of English; and yet the man I have liked the best in Paris is an Englishman, lord Offory, who is one of the most sensible amiable young men I ever saw, with a great deal of lord Tavistock in his manner.

The joys of Fontainebleau I miss by my illness—Patienza! If the gout deprived me of nothing better than a court.

The papers say the duke of Dorset is dead: what has he done for lord George?

George? You cannot be so unconscionable as not to answer me. I don't ask who is to have his ribband; nor how many bushels of fruit the duke of Newcastle's dessert for the hereditary prince contained; nor how often he kissed him for the sake of the *dear house of Brunswic*—No, keep your politics to yourselves; I want to know none of them:—when I do, and authentically, I will write to my lady ——— or Charles Townshend.

Mrs. Pitt's friend, madame de Rochefort, is one of my principal attachments, and very agreeable indeed. Madame de Mirepoix another. For my admiration, madame de Monaco—but I believe you don't doubt my lord ——'s taste in sensualities. March's passion, the marechalle d'Estrées, is affected, cross, and not at all handsome. The princes of the blood are pretty much retired, do not go to Portsmouth and Salisbury once a week, nor furnish every other paragraph to the newspapers. Their campaigns are confined to killing boars and stags, two or three hundred in a year.

Adieu! Mr. Foley is my banker; or it is still more sure if you send your letter to Mr. Conway's office.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VIII.

TO DR. BERKENHOUT^{*}.

July 6, 1773.

SIR,

I AM so much engaged in private business at present, that I have not had time to thank you for the favour of your letter: nor can I now answer it to your satisfaction.

My life has been too insignificant to afford materials interesting to the

^{*}In answer to a letter from doctor Berkenhout, announcing his being engaged in a work called "A Biographical History of British Literature," and begging materials for a life of Mr. Walpole. E.

public. In general, the lives of mere authors are dry and unentertaining; nor, though I have been one occasionally, are my writings of a class or merit to entitle me to any distinction. I can as little furnish you, sir, with a list of them or their dates, which would give me more trouble to make out than is worth while. If I have any merit with the public, it is for printing and preserving some valuable works of others; and if ever you write the lives of printers, I may be enrolled in the number. My own works, I suppose, are dead and buried; but as I am not impatient to be interred with them, I hope you will leave that office to the parson of the parish, and I shall be, as long as I live,

Your obliged humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE,

LETTER IX.

To LADY —.

YOUR ladyship's illustrious exploits are the constant theme of my meditations. Your expeditions are so rapid, and to such distant regions, that I cannot help thinking you are possessed of the giant's boots that stepped seven leagues at a stride, as we are assured by that accurate historian Mother Goose. You are, I know, madam, an excellent walker, yet methinks seven leagues at once are a prodigious straddle for a fair lady. But whatever is your manner of travelling, few heroines ancient or modern can be compared to you for length of journeys. Thalestris queen of the Amazons, and M. M. or N. N. queen of Sheba, went each of them the Lord knows how far to meet Alexander the great, and Solomon the wise; the one to beg the favour of having a daughter (I suppose) and heiress by him; and the other, says scandal, to grant a like favour to the Hebrew monarch. Your ladyship, who has more real Amazonian principles, never makes visits but to empresses, queens, and princesses; and your country is enriched with the maxims of wisdom and virtue which you collect in your travels. For such great ends did Herodotus, Pythagoras, and other sages, make voyages to
Egypt

Egypt and every distant kingdom; and it is amazing how much their own countries were benefited by what those philosophers learned in their peregrinations. Were it not that your ladyship is actuated by such public spirit, I could put you in mind, madam, of an old story that might save you a great deal of fatigue and danger—and now I think of it, as I have nothing better to fill my letter with, I will relate it to you.

Pyrrhus, the martial and *magnanimous* king of Epirus (as my lord Lyttelton would call him), being, as I have heard or seen Goodman Plutarch say, intent on his preparations for invading Italy; Cineas, one of the grooms of his bed-chamber, took the liberty of asking his majesty what benefit he expected to reap if he should be successful in conquering the Romans?—Jesus! said the king peevishly; why, the question answers itself. When we have overcome the Romans, no province, no town, whether Greek or barbarian, will be able to resist us: we shall at once be masters of all Italy. Cineas, after a short pause, replied, And having subdued Italy, what shall we do next?—Do next? answered Pyrrhus; why, seize Sicily.—Very likely, quoth Cineas; but will that put an end to the war?—The gods forbid! cried his majesty: when Sicily is reduced, Libya and Carthage will be within our reach. And then, without giving Cineas time to put in a word, the heroic prince ran over Africa, Greece, Asia, Persia, and every other country he had ever heard of upon the face of God's earth; not one of which he intended should escape his victorious sword. At last, when he was at the end of his geography and a little out of breath, Cineas watched his opportunity, and said quietly, Well, sire, and when we have conquered all the world, what are we to do then?—Why, then, said his majesty, extremely satisfied with his own prowess, we will live at our ease; we will spend whole days in banqueting and carousing, and will think of nothing but our pleasures.

Now, madam, for the application. Had I had the honour a few years ago of being your confidential abigail, when you meditated a visit to princess Esterhazy, I would have ventured to ask your ladyship of what advantage her acquaintance would be to you? Probably you would have told me, that she would introduce you to several electresses and margravines, whose courts you would visit. That having conquered all their hearts, as I am persuaded you would, your next jaunt should be to Hesse; from whence it would be but a trip to Aix; where madame de Rochouart lives. Soaring from thence,
you

you would repair to the Imperial court at Vienna, where resides the most august, most virtuous and most plump of empresses and queens—no, I mistake—I should only have said, of empresses; for her majesty of Denmark, God bless her! is reported to be full as virtuous, and three stone heavier. Shall not you call at Copenhagen, madam? If you do, you are next door to the Czarina, who is the quintessence of friendship, as the princess Daskioff says, whom, next to the late Czar, her Muscovite majesty loves above all the world. Asia, I suppose, would not enter into your ladyship's system of conquest; for, though it contains a sight of queens and sultanas, the poor ladies are locked up in abominable places, into which I am sure your ladyship's amity would never carry you—I think they call them seraglios.—Africa has nothing but empresses stark-naked; and of complexions directly the reverse of your alabaster. They do not reign in their own right; and what is worse, the emperors of those barbarous regions wear no more robes than the sovereigns of their hearts—And what are princes and princesses without velvet and ermine? As I am not a jot a better geographer than king Pyrrhus, I can at present recollect but one lady more who reigns alone, and that is her majesty of Otaheite, lately discovered by Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander; and for whom your ladyship's compassionate breast must feel the tenderest emotions, she having been cruelly deprived of her faithful minister and lover Tobiu, since dead at Batavia.

Well, madam, after you should have given me the plan of your intended expeditions, and not left a queen regent on the face of the globe unvisited, I would ask what we were to do next?—Why then, dear Abigail, you would have said, we will retire to ———, we will plant shrubs all the morning, read Anderson's Royal Genealogies all the evening; and once or twice a week I will go to Gunnersbury and drink a bottle with princess Amelia.—Alas, dear lady! and cannot you do all that without skuttling from one end of the world to the other?—This was the upshot of all Cineas's inquisitiveness: and this is the pith of this tedious letter from, madam,

Your ladyship's most faithful Aulic counsellor

And humble admirer,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER X.

TO DOCTOR GEM¹, AT PARIS.

Arlington-street, April 4, 1776.

IT is but fair, when one quits one's party, to give notice to those one abandons—at least, modern patriots, who often imbibe their principles of honour at Newmarket, use that civility. You and I, dear sir, have often agreed in our political notions; and you, I fear, will die without changing your opinion. For my part, I must confess I am totally altered; and, instead of being a warm partisan of liberty, now admire nothing but despotism. You will naturally ask what place I have gotten, or what bribe I have taken? Those are the criterions of political changes in England—but as my conversion is of foreign extraction, I shall not be the richer for it. In one word, it is the *relation du lit de justice*² that has operated the miracle. When two ministers³ are found so humane, so virtuous, so excellent, as to study nothing but the welfare and deliverance of the people; when a king listens to such excellent men; and when a parliament, from the basest, most interested motives, interposes to intercept the blessing, must I not change my opinions, and admire arbitrary power? or can I retain my sentiments, without varying the object?

Yes, sir, I am shocked at the conduct of the parliament—one would think it was an English one! I am scandalised at the speeches of the *avocat general*⁴, who sets up the odious interests of the nobility and clergy against the cries and groans of the poor, and who employs his wicked eloquence to tempt the good young monarch, by personal views, to sacrifice the mass of his subjects to the privileges of the few—But why do I call it eloquence? The fumes of interest had so clouded his rhetoric, that he falls into a downright Ironicism.—He tells the king, that the intended tax on the proprietors of land will affect the property not only of the rich, but of the poor.

¹ An English physician long settled at Paris, no less esteemed for his professional knowledge, than for his kind attention to the poor who applied to him for medical assistance.

He is still living at Paris, in the 80th year of his age, having passed through the dangers of

the revolution without suffering any material injury. E.

² The first lit de justice held by Louis XVI.

³ Messrs. de Maleherbes and Turgot.

⁴ Monsieur de Segurier.

I should be glad to know what is the property of the poor? Have the poor landed estates? Are those who have landed estates the poor? Are the poor that will suffer by the tax, the wretched labourers who are dragged from their famishing families to work on the roads?—But *it is* wicked eloquence when it finds a reason, or gives a reason, for continuing the abuse.—The advocate tells the king, those abuses are *presque consacrés par l'ancienneté*.—Indeed he says all that can be said for nobility, it is *consacrée par l'ancienneté*—and thus the length of the pedigree of abuses renders them respectable!

His arguments are as contemptible when he tries to dazzle the king by the great names of Henry quatre and Sully, of Louis XIV. and Colbert, two couple whom nothing but a mercenary orator would have classed together. Nor, were all four equally venerable, would it prove any thing. Even good kings and good ministers, if such have been, may have erred; nay, may have done the best they could. They would not have been good, if they wished their errors should be preserved, the longer they had lasted.

In short, sir, I think this resistance of the parliament to the adorable reformation planned by Messrs. de Turgot and Maleherbes, is more phlegmatically scandalous than the wildest tyranny of despotism. I forget what the nation was that refused liberty when it was offered. This opposition to so noble a work is worse. A whole people may refuse its own happiness; but these profligate magistrates resist happiness for others, for millions, for posterity!—Nay, do they not half vindicate Maupeou, who crushed them?—And you, dear sir, will you now chide my apostacy? Have I not cleared myself to your eyes? I do not see a shadow of sound logic in all monsieur Seguier's speeches, but in his proposing that the soldiers should work on the roads, and that passengers should contribute to their fabric; though, as France is not so luxuriously mad as England, I do not believe passengers could support the expence of the roads. That argument, therefore, is like another that the avocat proposes to the king, and which, he modestly owns, he believes would be impracticable.

I beg your pardon, sir, for giving you this long trouble; but I could not help venting myself, when shocked to find such renegade conduct in a parliament that I was rejoiced had been restored. Poor human kind! is it always to breed serpents from its own bowels? In one country it chooses its representatives, and they sell it and themselves—in others it exalts despots—in

in another it resists the despot when he consults the good of his people!—Can we wonder mankind is wretched, when men are such beings? Parliaments run wild with loyalty, when America is to be enslaved or butchered. They rebel, when their country is to be set free!—I am not surpris'd at the idea of the devil being always at our elbows. They who invented him, no doubt could not conceive how men could be so atrocious to one another, without the intervention of a fiend. Don't you think, if he had never been heard of before, that he would have been invented on the late partition of Poland? Adieu, dear sir!

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XI.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

THE purport of doctor Robertson's visit was to enquire where he could find materials for the reigns of king William and queen Anne, which he means to write as a supplement to David Hume. I had heard of his purpose, but did not own I knew it, that my discouragement might seem the more natural. I do not care a straw what he writes about the church's wet-nurse, goody Anne; but no Scot¹ is worthy of being the historian of William, but doctor Watson.

When he had told me his object, I said, "Write the reign of king Wil-

¹ Lord Orford changed his opinion upon this subject, after reading the accurate, impartial and elegant History of Doctor Somerville, which he always declared to be the most faultless account yet given of any interesting period of our history; and added, that its perfect impartiality would ever prevent its being popular.

The History of the reign of Queen Anne by the same author, announced for publication in an advertisement last winter, is impatiently expected, and is earnestly desired by all sincere ad-

mirers of the constitution of their country as established at the Revolution of 1688; and the present times seem peculiarly to require such candid investigation of great political principles already proved by a century's experience, in opposition to the host of ephemerid pamphlets equally foreign from the investigation of truth, whether they contain the wild and inconsiderate projects of the discontented, or the base and futile attempts of the interested to veil errors and misfortunes only recoverable by boldly meeting their magnitude. E.

liam, doctor Robertson ! That is a great task ! I look on him as the greatest man of modern times since his ancestor William prince of Orange." I soon found the doctor had very little idea of him, or had taken upon trust the pitiful partialities of Dalrymple and Macpherson. I said, "Sir, I do not doubt but king William came over with a view to the crown. Nor was he called upon by patriotism, for he was not an Englishman, to assert our liberties. No ; his patriotism was of a higher rank. He aimed not at the crown of England from ambition, but to employ its forces and wealth against Louis the XIVth, for the common cause of the liberties of Europe. The whigs did not understand the extent of his views, and the Tories betrayed him. He has been thought not to have understood us ; but the truth was, he took either party as it was predominant, that he might sway the parliament to support his general plan." The doctor, suspecting that I doubted his principles being enlarged enough to do justice to so great a character, told me he himself had been born and bred a whig, though he owned he was *now* a moderate one—I believe, a very moderate one. I said Macpherson had done great injustice to another hero, the duke of Marlborough, whom he accuses of betraying the design on Breft to Louis XIV. The truth was, as I heard often in my youth from my father, my uncle, and old persons who had lived in those times, that the duke trusted the duchess with the secret, and she her sister the popish duchess of Tyrconnel, who was as poor and as bigoted as a church mouse. A corroboration of this was the wise and sententious answer of king William to the duke, whom he taxed with having betrayed the secret. "Upon my honour, sir," said the duke, "I told it to nobody but my wife." "I did not tell it to mine," said the king.

I added, that Macpherson's and Dalrymple's invidious scandals really serve but to heighten the amazing greatness of the king's genius ; for, if they say true, he maintained the crown on his head, though the nobility, the church-men, the country gentlemen, the people were against him ; and though almost all his own ministers betrayed him—"But," said I, "nothing is so silly as to suppose that the duke of Marlborough and lord Godolphin ever meant seriously to restore king James. Both had offended him too much to expect forgiveness, especially from so remorseless a nature. Yet a re-revolution was so probable, that it is no wonder they kept up a correspondence with him, at least to break their fall if he returned. But as they never

never did effectuate the least service in his favour, when they had the fullest power, nothing can be inferred but king James's folly in continuing to lean on them. To imagine they meant to sacrifice his weak daughter, whom they governed absolutely, to a man who was sure of being governed by others, one must have as little sense as James himself had.

The precise truth I take to have been this. Marlborough and Godolphin both knew the meanness and credulity of James's character. They knew that he must be ever dealing for partisans; and they might be sure, that if he could hope for support from the general and the lord treasurer, he must be less solicitous for more impotent supporters. "Is it impossible," said I to the doctor, "but they might correspond with the king even by Anne's own consent? Do not be surpris'd, sir," said I: "such things have happened. My own father often received letters from the pretender, which he always carried to George II. and had them indorsed by his majesty. I myself have seen them countersigned by the king's own hand."

In short, I endeavour'd to impress him with proper ideas of his subject, and painted to him the difficulties, and the want of materials. But the bookfellers will out-argue me, and the doctor will forget his education—*Panem et Circenses*, if you will allow me to use the latter for those that are captivated by favour in the *circle*, will decide his writing and give the colour. I once wish'd he should write the History of King William; but his Charles V. and his America have opened my eyes, and the times have shut his. Adieu!

LETTER XII.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

I HAVE been reading a new French translation of the elder Pliny, of whom I never read but scraps before; because, in the poetical manner in which we learn Latin at Eton, we never become acquainted with the names of the commonest things, too undignified to be admitted into verse; and therefore I never had patience to search in a dictionary for the meaning of every substantive. I find I shall not have a great deal less trouble with the translation, as I am not more familiar with their common *drogues* than

than with the Latin. However, the beginning goes off very glibly, as I am not yet arrived below the planets. But do you know that this study, of which I have never thought since I learnt astronomy at Cambridge, has furnished me with some very entertaining ideas! I have long been weary of the common jargon of poetry. You bards have exhausted all the nature we are acquainted with; you have treated us with the sun, moon, and stars, the earth and the ocean, mountains and valleys, &c. &c. under every possible aspect. In short, I have longed for some American poetry, in which I might find new appearances of nature, and consequently of art. But my present excursion into the sky has afforded me more entertaining prospects, and newer phenomena. If I was as good a poet as you are, I would immediately compose an idyl, or an elegy, the scene of which should be laid in Saturn or Jupiter; and then, instead of a niggardly soliloquy by the light of a single moon, I would describe a night illuminated by four or five moons at least, and they should be all in a perpendicular or horizontal line, according as Celia's eyes (who probably in that country has at least two pair) are disposed in longitude or latitude. You must allow that this system would diversify poetry amazingly—And then Saturn's belt! which the translator says in his notes, is not round the planet's waste, like the shingles, but is a globe of crystal that incloses the whole orb, as you may have seen an enamelled watch in a case of glass. If you do not perceive what infinitely pretty things may be said, either in poetry or romance, on a brittle heaven of crystal, and what furbelowed rainbows they must have in that country, you are neither the Ovid nor natural philosopher I take you for. Pray send me an eclogue directly upon this plan—and I give you leave to adopt my idea of Saturnian Celias' having their every thing quadrupled—which would form a much more entertaining rhapsody than Swift's thought of magnifying or diminishing the species in his Gulliver. How much more execution a fine woman would do with two pair of *piercers!* or four! and how much longer the honey-moon would last, if both the sexes have (as no doubt they have) four times the passions, and four times the means of gratifying them!—I have opened new worlds to you—You must be four times the poet you are, and then you will be above Milton, and equal to Shakespeare, the only two mortals I am acquainted with, who ventured beyond the visible diurnal sphere, and preserved their intellects. Dryden himself would have talked nonsense, and, I fear, bawdy, on my plan; but you are too good a divine, I am sure, to treat my quadruple

ple love but platonically. In Saturn, notwithstanding their glass-case, they are supposed to be very cold; but platonic love of itself produces frigid conceits enough, and you need not augment the dose—But I will not dictate. The subject is new; and you, who have so much imagination, will shoot far beyond me. Fontenelle would have made something of the idea even in prose; but Algarotti would dishearten any body from attempting to meddle with the system of the universe a second time in genteel dialogue. Good-night! I am going to bed.—Mercy on me! if I should dream of Celia with four times the usual attractions!

LETTER XIII.

TO MR. PINKERTON¹.

March 17, 1785.

I AM much obliged to you, sir, for the many civil and kind expressions in your letter, and for the friendly information you give me. Partiality, I fear, dictated the former; but the last I can only ascribe to the goodness of your heart.

I have published nothing of any size but the pieces you mention, and one or two small tracts, now out of print and forgotten. The rest have been prefaces to some of my Strawberry editions, and to a few other publications, and some fugitive pieces, which I reprinted several years ago in a small volume, and which shall be at your service with the Catalogue of Noble Authors.

With regard to the bookseller who has taken the trouble to collect my writings (amongst which I do not doubt but he will generously bestow on me many that I did not write, according to the laudable practice of such compilers), and who also intends to write my life, to which, as I never did any thing worth the notice of the public, he must likewise be a volunteer contributor, it would be vain for me to endeavour to prevent such a design. Whoever has been so unadvised as to throw himself on the public,

¹ Author of *Letters on Literature*, an Essay from the accession of the house of Stuart to that on Medals, and of the *History of Scotland*, of Mary. E.

must

must pay such a tax in a pamphlet or a magazine when he dies; but happily the insects that prey on carrion, are still more short-lived than the carcases were from which they draw temporary nutriment. Those momentary abortions live but a day, and are thrust aside by like embryos. Literary characters, when not illustrious, are known only to a few literary men, and, amidst the world of books, few readers can come to my share. Printing, that secures existence (in libraries) to indifferent authors of any bulk, is like those cases of Egyptian mummies which in catacombs preserve bodies of one knows not whom, and which are scribbled over with characters that nobody attempts to read, till nobody understands the language in which they were written.

I believe, therefore, it will be most wise to swim for a moment on the passing current, secure that it will soon hurry me into the ocean where all things are forgotten. To appoint a biographer is to bespeak a panegyric; and I doubt whether they who collect their works for the public, and like me are conscious of no intrinsic worth, do not beg mankind to accept of talents (whatever they were) in lieu of virtues. To anticipate spurious publications by a comprehensive and authentic one is almost as great an evil. It is giving a body to scattered atoms—and such an act in one's old age is declaring a fondness for the indiscretions of youth, or for trifles of an age, which though more mature is only the less excusable. It is most true, sir, that so far from being prejudiced in favour of my own writings, I am persuaded that, had I thought early as I think now, I should never have appeared as an author. Age, frequent illness and pain have given me many hours of reflection in the intervals of the latter, which, besides showing me the inutility of all our little views, have suggested an observation that I love to encourage in myself from the rationality of it. I have learnt and have practised the mortifying task of comparing myself with great authors, and that comparison has annihilated all the flattery that self-love could suggest. I know how trifling my own writings are, and how far below the standard that constitutes excellence—for the shades that distinguish the degrees of mediocrity, they are not worth discrimination; and he must be humble, or easily satisfied, who can be content to glimmer for a moment a little more than his brethren glow-worms. Mine therefore, you find, sir, is not humility, but pride. When young, I wished for fame; not examining whether I was capable of attaining it, nor considering in what light fame was desirable. There are two sorts

forts of honest fame—that attendant on the truly great, and that better kind which is due to the good. I fear I did not aim at the latter, nor discovered that I could never compass the former. Having neglected the best road, and having instead of the other strolled into a narrow path that led to no goal worth seeking, I see the idleness of my journey, and hold it more graceful to abandon my wanderings to chance or oblivion, than to mark solicitude for trifles which I think so myself.

I beg your pardon for talking so much about myself; but an answer was due to the unmerited attention you have paid to my writings. I turn with more pleasure to speak on yours. Forgive me if I shall blame you, whether you either abandon your intention¹ or are too impatient to finish it. Your preface proves that you are capable of treating the subject ably—but allow me to repeat, that it is a kind of subject that ought not to be executed impetuously. A mere recapitulation of authenticated facts would be dry. A more enlarged plan would demand acquaintance with the characters of the actors, and with the *probable* sources of measures. The age is accustomed to details and anecdotes; and the age immediately preceding his own is less known to any man than the history of any other period. You are young enough, sir, to collect information on many particulars that will occur in your progress, from living actors, at least from their cotemporaries; and great as your ardour may be, you will find yourself delayed by the want of materials and by further necessary enquiries. As you have variety of talents, why should you not exercise them on works that will admit of more rapidity, and at the same time, at leisure moments, commence, digest and enrich your plan by collecting new matter for it?

In one word, I have too much zeal for your credit not to dissuade precipitation in a work of the kind you meditate. That I speak sincerely and without flattery, you are sure, as accident, not design, made you acquainted with my admiration of your tract on medals. If I wish to delay your history, it must be that it may appear with more advantages; and I must speak disinterestedly, as my age will not allow me to hope to see it, if not finished soon. I should not forgive myself if I turned you from prosecution of your work—but as I am sure my writings can have given you no opinion of my hav-

¹ Of writing a History of the reign of George the second.

ing sound and deep judgment, pray follow your own, and allow no merit but that of sincerity and zeal to the sentiments of

Your obliged and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R XIV.

To Mr. PINKERTON, on his LETTERS ON LITERATURE, under the Name of HERON.

June 25, 1783.

I AM much obliged to your book, sir, on many accounts, particularly for having recalled my mind to subjects of delight to which it was grown dulled by age and indolence. In consequence of your reclaiming it, I asked myself why you feel so much disregard to certain authors whose fame is established.—You have assigned good reasons for withholding your approbation from some, from their being imitators—It was natural then to ask myself again, whence they had obtained so much celebrity?—I think I have discovered a cause which I do not remember to have seen noted; and that cause I think was, that such authors possessed grace. Do not suspect me for a disciple of lord Chesterfield—nor imagine that I mean to erect grace into a capital ingredient in writing. But I do believe that it is a perfume that will preserve from putrefaction, and is distinct even from style. It is from the charm of grace that I believe some authors not in your favour obtained part of their renown—Virgil in particular.—Though I am far from disagreeing with you on him in general—I think there is such a want of invention (and when he did invent it was so foolishly), so little good sense, so little variety, and so little power over the passions, that I have often said, from contempt for his matter, and from the charm of his harmony, I believe I should like him better if I was to hear the *Æneid* repeated and did not understand Latin.—But he has more than harmony; whatever he utters is said gracefully—A Roman farmer might not understand the *Georgic*, but a Roman courtier was made to understand farming—the farming of that age—and Virgil could captivate a lord of Augustus's bedchamber, and tempt him to listen to themes of rusticity. This I think is more than the power of style; it was ennobling

bling the subject: I confess I admire Mr. Addison's phrase, that Virgil tossed his dung about with an air of majesty. A style may be excellent without grace—for instance, Swift's. Eloquence may bestow a lasting style and one of more dignity; but eloquence may want that ease, that genteel air, that flows from or constitutes grace. Addison was master of that grace in his pieces of humour, and, perhaps from that secret, excels all men that ever lived, but Shakespeare, in humour, by never dropping into an approach to burlesque and buffoonery, even when his humour descended to characters that in any other hands would have been vulgarly low. Fielding had as much humour perhaps as Addison, but, having no idea of grace, is perpetually disgusting.

The Grecians had grace in every thing—in oratory, in poetry, in statuary, in architecture, and I dare say in painting and music.

The Romans, it is true, were their imitators, but, having grace too, imparted it to their copies, which gave them a merit that almost raises them to a level with the originals.

Horace's odes acquired their fame, no doubt, from the graces of his style—a capital merit of both Tibullus and Propertius, who certainly cannot boast of more meaning than there is in Horace's odes.

Waller, whom you prescribe, sir, owed his fame to the graces of his manner, though he frequently stumbled and even fell flat—but a few of his smaller pieces are as graceful as possible.

Milton has merit so much superior, that I will only say, that if his Raphael, his Satan and his Adam have as much dignity as the Apollo Belvidere, his Eve has all the delicacy of the Venus of Medici, and his description of Eden has the colouring of Albano. His tenderness always imprints ideas as graceful as Guido's Madonnas, and the Allegro, Penferoso and Comus might be denominated from the three Graces.

Milton's soul was full of poetry, sense, and fire, and he had improved all those qualities by studying the best models.

Thus prepared, he gave a loose to his genius, which was too impetuous and
4 P 2
sublime

sublime to be curbed by the mechanism of rhyme, which would often have impeded his expressing all he felt, and oftener perhaps have obliged him to add frigidities to help out the return of the sound. The language, therefore, of Milton's blank verse was not studied, but the natural application of his own tongue to deliver his own ideas. The imitators of Milton, on the contrary, study his phrase to express common ideas, their own ideas, void of his vigour. Thence the diction of Thomson, Akenfide, &c. &c. is less easy than it would have been if they had written in rhyme. Their language is not poetic, but bombast prose, or rather prose dressed in poetic rags. The *Paradise Lost* is like M. Angelo's *Moses*—The *Seasons*, and the *Pleasures of the Imagination*, like the king of hearts and diamonds, with robes made of patches of gaudy colours, that do not unite, and differ from the knaves but by the length of their trains.

Cowley, I think, would have had grace, for his mind was graceful, if he had had any ear, or if his taste had not been vitiated by the pursuit of wit; for false wit always deviates into tinsel or pertness. Pertness is mistaken affectation of grace, as pedantry is erroneous dignity—The familiarity of the one, and the clumsiness of the other, prevent or destroy grace.

Nature, that produces samples of all qualities, and in the scale of gradation exhibits all possible shades, affords us types that are more apposite than words. The eagle is sublime, the lion majestic, the swan graceful, the monkey pert, the bear ridiculously awkward. I mention these as more expressive than I could make definitions of my meaning: but I will only apply the swan, under whose wings I will shelter an apology for Racine, whose pieces give me the idea of that bird. The colouring of the swan is pure, his attitudes are graceful, he never displeases you when sailing on his proper element. His feet are ugly, his walk not natural—he can soar, but it is with difficulty. Still the impression a swan leaves is that of grace. So does Racine.

Boileau may be compared to the dog, whose sagacity is remarkable, as well as its fawning on its master, and its snarling at those he dislikes. If Boileau was too stern to admit the pliancy of grace, he compensates by good sense and propriety. He is like (for I will drop animals) an upright magistrate, whom you respect, but whose public justice and severity leave an
awe

awe that discourages familiarity. His copies of the ancients may be too servile—but if a good translator deserves praise, Boileau deserves more—he certainly does not fall below his originals, and, considering when he wrote, has a greater merit still. By his imitations he held out to his countrymen models of taste, and banished totally the bad taste of his predecessors. For his *Lutrin*, replete with excellent poetry, wit, humour, and satire, he certainly was not obliged to the ancients. Except Horace, how little idea had either Greeks or Romans of wit and humour! Aristophanes and Lucian, compared with moderns, were, the one a blackguard, the other a buffoon. To my eyes, the *Lutrin*, the *Dispensary*, and the *Rape of the Lock*, are standards of elegance and grace not to be paralleled by antiquity, and are eternal and mortifying reproaches to Voltaire, whose indelicacy in the *Pucelle* degraded him as much, when compared with the three authors I have named, as his *Henriade* leaves Virgil and even Lucan, whom he more resembles, by far his superiors. The *Dunciad* is dishonoured by the offensive images of the games, but the poetry appears to me admirable; and though the fourth book has obscurities, I prefer it to the three others. It has descriptions not surpassed by any poet that ever existed, and which surely a writer merely ingenious will never equal. The lines on Italy, on Venice, on Convents, have all that grace for which I contend, as an ingredient distinct from the general beauties allotted to poetry—and the *Rape of the Lock* (besides the originality of the invention) is a standard of graceful writing.

In general, I believe that what I call grace is denominated elegance—but I think grace is something higher. I will explain myself by instances rather than by words. Apollo is graceful, Mercury elegant.

Petrarch, perhaps, owed his whole merit to the harmony of his numbers, and the graces of his style. They conceal his want of meaning, and want of variety: and his complaints may have added an interest, which, had his passion been successful, and had expressed itself with equal sameness, would have made the number of his sonnets insupportable. Melancholy in a poet, I am inclined to think, contributes to grace, when it is not disgraced by pitiful lamentations, like Ovid's and Cicero's in their banishment. We respect melancholy. A gay writer who should only express satisfaction without variety, would soon be nauseous.

Madame

Madame de Sevigné is an instance of both.—There is too much of grief for her daughter's absence—yet it is always expressed by new turns and new images. When she forgets her concern, and returns to her natural disposition, gaiety, every paragraph has novelty:—her allusions, her applications are the happiest possible. She has the art of making you acquainted with all her acquaintance; and even with the spots she inhabited. Her language is correct, though unstudied; and when her mind is full of any great event, she interests you with the warmth of a dramatic writer, not with the chilling impartiality of an historian.—Pray read her account of the death of marshal Turenne, and of the arrival of king James in France, and tell me whether you do not know their persons as if you had lived at the time. For my part, if you will allow me a word of digression, I hate the cold impartiality recommended to historians.—*Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum ipsi tibi.*—But that I may not wander again, nor tire you, nor contradict you any more, I will finish—only interceding for grace, as an apology for several writers to whom I think you a little too severe.

L E T T E R X V .

TO THE RIGHT HON. ELIZABETH LADY CRAVEN¹.

Berkeley-square, November 27, 1786.

TO my extreme surprise, madam, when I knew not in what quarter of the known or unknown world you was resident or existent, my maid in Berkeley-square sent me to Strawberry-hill a note from your ladyship, offering to call on me for a moment—for a whirlwind, I suppose, was waiting at your door to carry you to Japan; and, as balloons have not yet settled any post-offices in the air, you could not, at least did not, give me any direction where to address you—though you did kindly reproach me with my silence. I must enter into a little justification before I proceed. I heard from you from Venice, then from Poland, and then, having whisked through Tartary, from Petersburg—but still with no directions. I said to myself, “I will write to Grand Cairo, which, probably, will be her next stage.” Nor was I totally in the wrong—for there came a letter from Con-

¹ Now margravine of Anspach.

stantinople,

stantinople, with a design mentioned of going to the Greek islands, and orders to write to you at Vienna, but with no banker or other address specified.

For a great while I had even stronger reasons than these for silence. For several months I was disabled by the gout from holding a pen; and you must know, madam, that one can't write when one cannot write. Then, how write to *la Financée du Roi de Garbe*? You had been in the tent of the cham of Tartary, and in the haram of the captain pacha, and, during your navigation of the Ægean, were possibly fallen into the terrible power of a corsair. How could I suppose that so many despotic infidels would part with your charms? I never expected you again on christian ground. I did not doubt your having a talisman to make people in love with you; but anti-talismans are quite a new specific.

Well, while I was in this quandary, I received a delightful drawing of the castle of Otranto—but still provokingly without any address. However, my gratitude for so very agreeable and obliging a present could not rest till I found you out. I wrote to the duchess of Richmond, to beg she would ask your brother captain Berkeley for a direction to you; and he has this very day been so good as to send me one, and I do not lose a moment in making use of it.

I give your ladyship a million of thanks for the drawing, which was really a very valuable gift to me. I did not even know that there was a castle of Otranto. When the story was finished I looked into the map of the kingdom of Naples for a well-sounding name, and that of Otranto was very sonorous. Nay, but the drawing is so satisfactory, that there are two small windows, one over another, and looking into the country, that suit exactly to the small chambers from one of which Matilda heard the young peasant singing beneath her. Judge how welcome this must be to the author; and thence judge, madam, how much you must have obliged him!

When you take another flight towards the bounds of the western ocean, remember to leave a direction. One cannot always shoot flying. Lord Chesterfield directed a letter to the late lord Pembroke, who was always swimming, "To the earl of Pembroke in the Thames, over against Whitehall." That was sure of finding him within a certain number of fathom; but

but your ladyship's longitude varies so rapidly, that one must be a good bowler indeed, to take one's ground so judiciously that by casting wide of the mark one may come in near to the jack.

I have the honour to be, with gratitude and respect,

Your ladyship's most obliged humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVI.

TO LADY CRAVEN.

Berkeley-square, January 2, 1787.

YOUR ladyship tells me that you have kept a journal of your travels—you know not when your friends at Paris will give you time to put it *au net*—that is, I conclude and hope, prepare it for the press. I do not wonder that those friends, whether talismanic or others, are so assiduous, if you indulge them; but unless they are of the former description, they are unpardonable, if they know what they interrupt—and deserve much more that you should wish they had fallen into a ditch, than the poor gentlemen who sigh more to see you in sheets of holland than of paper. To me the mischief is enormous. How proud I should be to register a noble authorefs of my own country, who has travelled over more regions and farther than any female in print! Your ladyship has visited those islands and shores, whence formerly issued those travelling sages and legislators who fought and imported wisdom, laws and religion into Greece; and though we are so perfect as to want none of those commodities, the fame of those philosophers is certainly diminished when a fair lady has gone as far in quest of knowledge. You have gone in an age when travels are brought to a juster standard, by narrations being limited to truth.

Formerly the performers of the longest voyages destroyed half the merit of their expeditions, by relating not what they had, but had *not* seen; a sort of

of communication that they might have imparted without stirring a foot from home. Such exaggerations drew discredit on travels, till people would not believe that there existed in other countries any thing very different from what they saw in their own: and because no Patagonians, or gentry seven or eight feet high, were really discovered, they would not believe that there were Laplanders or pigmies of three and four. Incredulity went so far, that at last it was doubted whether China so much as existed; and our countryman sir John Mandeville got an ill name, because, though he gave an account of it, he had not brought back its right name—at least, if I do not mistake, this was the case—But it is long since I redde any thing about the matter; and I am willing to begin my travels again under your ladyship's auspices. I am sorry to hear, madam, that by your account lady Mary Wortley was not so accurate and faithful as modern travellers. The invaluable art of inoculation, which she brought from Constantinople, so dear to all admirers of beauty, and to which we owe perhaps the preservation of yours, stamps her an universal benefactress; and as you rival her in poetic talents, I had rather you would employ them to celebrate her for her nostrum, than detect her for romancing. However, genuine accounts of the interior of seraglios would be precious; and I was in hopes would become the greater rarities, as I flattered myself that your friends the empress of Russia and the emperor were determined to level Ottoman tyranny. His Imperial majesty, who has demolished the prison bars of so many nunneries, would perform a still more christian act in setting free so many useless sultanas; and her Czarish majesty, I trust, would be as great a benefactress to our sex, by abolishing the barbarous practice that reduces us to be of none. Your ladyship's indefatigable peregrinations should have such great objects in view, when you have the ear of sovereigns.

Peter the hermit conjured up the first crusadoes against the infidels by running about from monarch to monarch. Lady Craven should be as zealous and as renowned; and every fair Circassian would acknowledge that one English lady had repaid their country for the secret which another had given to Europe from their practice.

I have the honour to be, madam,

Your ladyship's most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVII.

To LADY CRAVEN.

Berkeley-square, December 11, 1788.

IT is agreeable to your ladyship's usual goodness to honour me with another letter—and I may say to your equity too, after I had proved to monsieur Mercier, by the list of dates of my letters, that it was not mine but the post's fault, that you did not receive one that I had the honour of writing to you above a year ago—Not, madam, that I could wonder, if you had the prudence to drop a correspondence with an old superannuated man, who, conscious of his decay, has had the decency of not troubling with his dotages persons of not near your ladyship's youth and vivacity. I have long been of opinion that few persons know *when* to die—I am not so English as to mean when to dispatch themselves—no, but when to go out of the world. I have usually applied this opinion to those who have made a considerable figure, and consequently it was not adapted to myself. Yet even we cyphers ought not to fatigue the public scene when we are become lumber. Thus, being quite out of the question, I will explain my maxim, which is the more wholesome, the higher it is addressed. My opinion then is, that when any personage has shown as much as is possible in his or her best walk (and not to repeat both genders every minute, I will use the male as the common of the two), he should take up his Strulbrugism, and be heard of no more. Instances will be still more explanatory. Voltaire ought to have pretended to die after *Alzire*, *Mahomet* and *Semiramis*, and not have produced his wretched last pieces. Lord Chatham should have closed his political career with his immortal war—And how weak was Garrick, when he had quitted the stage, to limp after the tatters of fame by writing and reading pitiful poems, and even by *sitting* to read plays which he had acted with such fire and energy! We have another example in Mr. A ———; who, if he had a friend upon earth, would have been obliged to him for being knocked on the head the moment he had published the *first* edition of the Bath Guide; for even in the second he had exhausted his whole stock of inspiration, and has never written any thing tolerable since. When such unequal authors print their works together, one may apply in a new light the old hacked simile of Mezentius, who tied together the living and the dead.

We

We have just received the works of an author from whom I find I am to receive much less entertainment than I expected, because I shall have much less to read than I intended. His Memoirs, I am told, are almost wholly military, which, therefore, I shall not read—and his poetry, I am sure, I shall not look at, because I should understand it.—What I saw of it formerly convinced me that he would not have been a poet, even if he had written in his own language; and though I do not understand German, I am told it is a fine language; and I can easily believe that any tongue (not excepting our old barbarous Saxon, which, a bit of an antiquary as I am, I abhor) is more harmonious than French. It was curious absurdity, therefore, to pitch on the most unpoetic language in Europe, the most barren and the most clogged with difficulties. I have heard Russian and Polish sung, and both sounded musical—but to abandon one's own tongue, and not adopt Italian, that is even sweeter and softer and more copious than the Latin, was a want of taste that I should think could not be applauded even by a Frenchman born in Provence. But what a language is the French, which measures verses by feet that never are to be pronounced, which is the case wherever the mute *e* is found! What poverty of various sounds for rhyme, when, lest similar cadences should too often occur, their mechanic bards are obliged to marry masculine and feminine terminations as alternately as the black and white squares of a chess-board! Nay, will you believe me, madam? Yes, you will; for you may convince your own eyes, that a scene of Zaire begins with three of the most nasal adverbs that ever snorted together in a breath. *Enfin, donc, désormais* are the culprits in question. *Enfin donc*, need I tell your ladyship, that the author I alluded to at the beginning of this long tirade is the late king of Prussia?

I am conscious that I have taken a little liberty when I excommunicate a tongue in which your ladyship has condescended to write—but I only condemn it for verse and pieces of eloquence, of which I thought it alike incapable, till I redde Rousseau of Geneva. It is a most sociable language, and charming for narrative and epistles. Yet, write as well as you will in it, you must be liable to express yourself better in the speech natural to you; and your own country has a right to understand all your works, and is jealous of their not being as perfect as you could make them. Is it not more creditable to be translated into a foreign language than into your own? and will it not vex you to hear the translation taken for the original, and to

find vulgarisms that you could not have committed yourself? But I have done, and will release you, madam; only observing, that you flatter me with a vain hope when you tell me you shall return to England sometime or other. Where will that time be for me?—and when it arrives, shall not I be somewhere else?

I do not pretend to send your ladyship English news, nor to tell you of English literature. You must before this time have heard of the dismal state into which our chief personage is fallen! That consideration absorbs all others. The two houses are going to settle some intermediate succedaneum, and *the obvious one*, no doubt, will be fixed on.

This letter, I hope, will be more fortunate than my last. I should be very unhappy to seem again ungrateful, when I have the honour of being with the greatest respect,

Madam, your ladyship's most obliged and most humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVIII.

TO THOMAS BARRETT, Esq. OF LEE IN KENT.

Berkeley-square, June 5, 1788.

I WISH I could charge myself with any merit, which I always wish to have, towards you, dear sir, in letting Mr. Matthew see Strawberry; but in truth he has so much merit and modesty and taste himself, that I gave him the ticket with pleasure—which it seldom happens to me to do; for most of those who go thither, go because it is the fashion, and because *a party* is a prevailing custom too; and my tranquillity is disturbed, because nobody likes to stay at home. If Mr. Matthew was really entertained, I am glad—but Mr. Wyatt has made him too correct a Goth not to have seen all the imperfections and bad execution of my attempts; for neither Mr. Bentley nor my workmen had *studied* the science, and I was always too desultory and impatient to consider that I should please myself more by allowing time, than by hurrying my plans into execution before they were ripe. My house
therefore

therefore is but a sketch by beginners; yours is finished by a great master—and if Mr. Matthew liked mine, it was *en virtuose*, who loves the dawnings of an art, or the glimmerings of its restoration.

I finished Mr. Gibbon a full fortnight ago, and was extremely pleased. It is a most wonderful mass of information, not only on history, but almost on all the ingredients of history, as war, government, commerce, coin, and what not. If it has a fault, it is in embracing too much, and consequently in not detailing enough, and in striding backwards and forwards from one set of princes to another, and from one subject to another; so that, without much historic knowledge, and without much memory, and much method in one's memory, it is almost impossible not to be sometimes bewildered: nay, his own impatience to tell what he knows, makes the author, though commonly so explicit, not perfectly clear in his expressions. The last chapter of the fourth volume, I own, made me recoil, and I could scarcely push through it. So far from being catholic or heretic, I wished Mr. Gibbon had never heard of Monophysites, Nestorians, or any such fools!—But the sixth volume made ample amends; Mahomet and the popes were gentlemen and good company.—I abominate fractions of theology and reformation.

Mr. Sheridan, I hear, did not quite satisfy the passionate expectation that had been raised:—But it was impossible he could, when people had worked themselves up into an enthusiasm of offering fifty—aye, *fifty* guineas for a ticket to hear him. Well! we are sunk and deplorable in many points—yet not absolutely gone, when history and eloquence throw out such shoots! I thought I had outlived my country; I am glad not to leave it desperate! Adieu, dear sir!

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

* Of his speech in Westminster-hall, upon bringing forward one of the charges against Mr. Hastings.

LETTER XIX.

To THOMAS BARRETT, Esq.

Berkeley-square, May 14, 1792.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH my poor fingers do not yet write easily, I cannot help enquiring if Mabeuse^{*} is arrived safely at Lee, and fits his destined stall in the library.

My amendment is far slower, *comme de raison* than ever, and my weakness much greater. Another fit, I doubt, will confine me to my chair, if it does not do more—it is not worth haggling about that.

Dr. Darwin has appeared, superior in some respects to the former part. The Triumph of Flora, beginning at the 59th line, is most beautifully and enchantingly imagined; and the twelve verses that by miracle describe and comprehend the creation of the universe out of chaos, are in my opinion the most sublime passage in any author, or in any of the few languages with which I am acquainted. There are a thousand other verses most charming, or indeed all are so, crowded with most poetic imagery, gorgeous epithets and style—and yet these four cantos do not please me equally with the Loves of the Plants.—This seems to me almost as much a rhapsody of unconnected parts; and is so deep, that I cannot read six lines together and know what they are about, till I have studied them in the long notes, and then perhaps do not comprehend them.—But all this is my fault, not Dr. Darwin's—Is he to blame, that I am no natural philosopher, no chymist, no metaphysician?

One misfortune will attend this glorious work—it will be little redde but by those who have no taste for poetry, and who will be weighing and criticizing his positions, without feeling the imagination, harmony and expression of the versification.

Is not it extraordinary, dear sir, that two of our very best poets, Garth and Darwin, should have been physicians?—I believe they have left all the lawyers wrangling at the turnpike of Parnassus. Adieu, dear sir!

Yours most cordially,

ORFORD.

* A capital picture by that master, then lately purchased by Mr. Barrett.

LETTER XX.

TO THE REVEREND MR. BELOE.

Strawberry-hill, December 2, 1794.

I DO beg and beseech you, good sir, to forgive me, if I cannot possibly consent to receive the dedication^{*} you are so kind and partial as to propose to me. I have in the most positive, and almost uncivil manner, refused a dedication or two lately. Compliments on virtues, which the persons addressed, like me, seldom possessed, are happily exploded and laughed out of use. Next to being ashamed of having good qualities bestowed on me to which I should have no title, it would hurt to be praised on my erudition, which is most superficial; and on my trifling writings, all of which turn on most trifling subjects. They amused me while writing them; may have amused a few persons; but have nothing solid enough to preserve them from being forgotten with other things of as light a nature. I would not have your judgment called in question hereafter, if somebody reading your Aulus Gellius should ask, "What were those writings of lord O. which Mr. Beloe so much commends? Was lord O. more than one of the *mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease*? Into that class I must sink—and I had rather do so imperceptibly, than be plunged down to it by the interposition of the hand of a friend, who could not gainsay the sentence.

For your own sake, my good sir, as well as in pity to my feelings, who am sore at your offering what I cannot accept, restrain the address to a mere inscription. You are allowed to be an excellent translator of classic authors—how unclassic would a dedication in the old-fashion manner appear! If you had published a new edition of Herodotus or Aulus Gellius, would you have ventured to prefix a Greek or Latin dedication to some modern lord with a Gothic title?

Still less, had those addresses been in vogue at Rome, would any Roman author have inscribed his work to Marcus, the incompetent son of Cicero, and told the unfortunate offspring of so great a man, *of his high birth and declension of ambition*? which would have excited a laugh on poor Marcus,

^{*} Of a translation of Aulus Gellius, by Mr. Beloe.

who,

who, whatever may have been said of him, had more sense than to leave proofs to the public of his extreme inferiority to his father.

I am, sir, &c. &c.

ORFORD.

LETTER XXI.

To WILLIAM ROSCOE, Esq.

Berkeley-square, April 4, 1795.

TO judge of my satisfaction and gratitude on receiving the very acceptable present of your book, sir, you should have known my extreme impatience for it from the instant Mr. Edwards had kindly favoured me with the first chapters. You may consequently conceive the mortification I felt at not being able to thank you immediately both for the volume and the obliging letter that accompanied it, by my right arm and hand being swelled and rendered quite immovable and useless, of which you will perceive the remains if you can read these lines which I am forcing myself to write, not without pain, the first moment I have power to hold a pen; and it will cost me some time, I believe, before I can finish my whole letter, earnest as I am, sir, to give a loose to my gratitude.

If you ever had the pleasure of reading such a delightful book as your own, imagine, sir, what a comfort it must be to receive such an anodyne in the midst of a fit of the gout that has already lasted above nine weeks, and which at first I thought might carry me to Lorenzo de Medici before he should come to me!

The complete volume has more than answered the expectations which the sample had raised. The Grecian simplicity of the style is preserved throughout; the same judicious candour reigns in every page; and without allowing yourself that liberty of indulging your own bias towards good or against criminal characters, which over-rigid critics prohibit, your artful candour compels your readers to think with you, without seeming to take a

* The Life of Lorenzo de' Medici.

part

part yourself. You have shown from his own virtues, abilities, and heroic spirit, why Lorenzo deserved to have Mr. Roscoe for his biographer.— And since you have been so, sir (for he was not completely known before, at least not out of Italy), I shall be extremely mistaken if he is not henceforth allowed to be, in various lights, one of the most excellent and greatest men with whom we are well acquainted, especially if we reflect on the shortness of his life and the narrow sphere in which he had to act. Perhaps I ought to blame my own ignorance, that I did not know Lorenzo as a beautiful poet: I confess I did not. Now I do, I own I admire some of his sonnets more than several—yes, even of Petrarch; for Lorenzo's are frequently more clear, less *alembiqués*, and not inharmonious as Petrarch's often are from being too crowded with words, for which room is made by numerous elisions, which prevent the softening alternacy of vowels and consonants. That thicket of words was occasioned by the embarrassing nature of the sonnet—a form of composition I do not love, and which is almost intolerable in any language but Italian, which furnishes such a profusion of rhymes. To our tongue the sonnet is mortal, and the parent of insipidity. The imitation in some degree of it was extremely noxious to a true poet, our Spenser; and he was the more injudicious by lengthening his stanza in a language so barren of rhymes as ours, and in which several words, whose terminations are of similar sounds, are so rugged, uncouth, and unmusical. The consequence was, that many lines which he forced into the service to complete the quota of his stanza are unmeaning, or silly, or tending to weaken the thought he would express.

Well, sir—but if you have led me to admire the compositions of Lorenzo, you have made me intimate with another poet of whom I had never heard, nor had the least suspicion, and who, though writing in a less harmonious language than Italian, outshines an able master of that country, as may be estimated by the fairest of all comparisons, which is when one of each nation verifies the same ideas and thoughts.

That novel poet I boldly pronounce is Mr. Roscoe. Several of his translations of Lorenzo are superior to the originals, and the verses more poetic—nor am I bribed to give this opinion by the present of your book, nor by any partiality, nor by the surprise of finding so pure a writer of

history as able a poet. Some good judges to whom I have shewn your translations entirely agree with me.

I will name one most competent judge, Mr. Hoole, so admirable a poet himself, and such a critic in Italian, as he has proved by a translation of Ariosto.

That I am not flattering you, sir, I will demonstrate; for I am not satisfied with one essential line in your version of the most beautiful, I think, of all Lorenzo's stanzas—It is his description of jealousy, in page 268, equal in my humble opinion to Dryden's delineations of the passions, and the last line of which is

Mai dorme, ed ostinata a se fol crede.

The thought to me is quite new, and your translation I own does not come up to it.—Mr. Hoole and I hammered at it, but could not content ourselves,—Perhaps by altering your last couplet you may enclose the whole sense, and make it equal to the preceding six.

I will not ask your pardon, sir, for taking so much liberty with you. You have displayed so much candour and so much modesty, and are so free from pretensions, that I am confident you will allow that truth is the sole ingredient that ought to compose deserved incense; and if ever commendation was sincere, no praise ever flowed with purer veracity than all I have said in this letter does from the heart of, sir,

Your infinitely obliged humble servant,

ORFORD.

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF ———.

January 13, 1797.

MY DEAR MADAM,

YOU distress me infinitely by showing my idle notes, which I cannot conceive can amuse any body. My old-fashioned breeding impels me every now and then to reply to the letters you honour me with writing; but in truth very unwillingly, for I seldom can have any thing particular to say; I scarce go out of my own house, and then only to two or three very private places, where I see nobody that really knows any thing—and what I learn comes from newspapers, that collect intelligence from coffee-houses—consequently, what I neither believe nor report. At home I see only a few charitable elders, except about fourscore nephews and nieces of various ages, who are each brought to me once a year, to stare at me as the Methusalem of the family; and they can only speak of their own cotemporaries, which interest me no more than if they talked of their dolls, or bats and balls. Must not the result of all this, madam, make me a very entertaining correspondent?—and can such letters be worth showing?—or can I have any spirit when so old and reduced to dictate? Oh! my good madam, dispense with me from such a task, and think how it must add to it to apprehend such letters being shown. Pray send me no more such laurels, which I desire no more than their leaves when decked with a scrap of tinsel, and stuck on twelfth-cakes that lie on the shop-boards of pastry-cooks at Christmas. I shall be quite content with a sprig of rosemary thrown after me, when the parson of the parish commits my dust to dust¹. Till then, pray, madam, accept the resignation of

Your ancient servant,

ORFORD.

¹ Lord Orford died in little more than six weeks after the date of this letter.

THE END.

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